Theologia Mystica:

TWO

DISCOURSES

CONCERNING

DIVINE COMMUNICATIONS

To Souls duly disposed.

I. The Antiquity, Tradition, and Succession of *Mystical Divinity* among the *Gentiles*; with Notes and Observations to distinguish *Illusions*; and Directions of Spiritual Writers concerning *Prayer*.

II. Of the *Guidance of the Spirit of GOD*: The Doctrine of the H. Scriptures, of the Catholick Church, and of the Church of *England* in particular, upon a Discourse of Sr. *Matthew Hale* concerning it.

LONDON,
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ADVERTISEMENT.

ASCETICKS: or, The Heroick Piety and Virtue of the Ancient Christian *Anchorets* and *Cœnobites*, (wherein the Beginning and Progress of Contemplative Living and Religious Societies is briefly discourſed; and a true Account of the *Eſſeans*, *Therapeuts*, and ancient *Egyptian* and other *Monks*, collected out of the moſt Authentick Records.) Alſo the LIFE of the Famous Saint *ANTONY*, written in *Greek* by St. *Athanaſius*, faithfully Tranſlated into *Engliſh*. All Printed for the Author, for the Uſe and Benefit of the Society afore-ſaid.

THE PREFACE.

THE latter of these Discourses *was* Printed *as part of a* Preface *to that Book of Sr.* Matthew Hale's, *from whence the beginning of the* Discourse *is now taken; but why it was* not Published *with it, I know no reason, unless that, which is the Universal primary Obstacle to all Good, that Satan hindered it. And that, I make no question, was the principal moving Cause, which set the others on work. That wicked, envious Spirit, who had raised up all the Evil he could, both against him, and against me, in our several Families in his Life-time, hath not ceased to do so still since his Death. By what he got such Advantage against my self, I know very well, and intend to declare it. But by what he got such Advantage against that good Man, is a Secret I know nothing of. But this I know, that he hath been Unhappy in his Family, both in his Life-time, and since his Death, and particularly in what I am now saying. I long looked upon*

him as a Man raiſed up by the Special Providence of God to be an Illuſtrious Example of Vertue *and* Piety *in this degenerate Age: And therefore, that People might not be deprived of the Benefit of ſuch an Example by their Ignorance of his Principles, (as I found by Experience many were) I did in his Life-time publiſh a Volume of his* Contemplations, *even after I had earneſtly preſſed him to conſent to it, and he refuſed: Indeed, I knew him; and he knew me, ſo well, that I did not fear any miſconſtruction from him: and after his Death, I deſired to have done Honour to his Memory for the ſame purpoſe, by the Publication of ſuch of his* Writings, *as were moſt neceſſary and ſeaſonable, that the Benefit of his* Labours, *as well as of his* Example, *while yet freſh in Memory, might be communicated, as much as might be, to all, and they might mutually recommend each other for the greater Benefit of all. But, alas! that wicked Spirit, which had ſo prevailed in his Family in his Life-time, as made him tell ſome of them,* That Satan, or the Devil, did ride them, as an Ape would do a Maſtiff-Dog, *hath likewiſe prevailed hitherto upon ſuch as vainly gloried in their Relation to him, to obſtruct that good Deſign for Twenty years together, without due regard either to that Service of God, thoſe Benefits to Men, the true Honour of his Memory, (in which they vainly gloried) or the Performance of his Will according to his Mind. For though he had*

not

not expreſsly ordered the Publication *of one or other in particular; yet had he made this Proviſion in a Codicil concerning the Publication of any of them, that he had nominated the* Bookſeller, *who ſhould have the* Printing *of them, paying as much as another would in reaſon for them: and of the Profits, appointed one part to one, for his Care and Pains in overſeeing and ordering the Publication; another part to another, for Writing and Correcting; and the reſt, among his Servants; and told them what he had done for them: ſo that beſides the Injury done to their* Country, *they have done a double Injury to his* Memory, *not only by hindering the Honour due to it, but by Diſhonouring it, and giving occaſion to a Blemiſh and Reproach to it, provoking ſome not only to think, but to ſpeak hardly of him, as if he had abuſed them in ſome of the laſt Acts of his Life: and all this out of a ſordid Humour to get or keep what he had otherwiſe diſpoſed of. And though thus they exerciſed their Malice and Spight againſt the Memory of the Good Man, yet was not this the chief part of their Work and Triumph, that they had raiſed this Injury againſt his Memory, and, beſides, had deprived his Country of the Benefit of much of his Labours in his own Profeſſion: But there is a greater matter in the bottom, and of greater concern to them, which theſe Wicked, Subtile Agents had a principal regard to. The Good Man had taken great Pains in examining and con-*

ſidering the Grounds and Evidences of Religion, *both* Natural *and* Revealed: *And he was excellently well qualified for it, both by Natural Sagacity, by Exerciſe of his Parts in his own Profeſſion, (which affords as much and good Exerciſe for ſuch a purpoſe as any) and by Freedom from Prejudice, either of Education or of Temporal Intereſt. For though he had a Religious Education, yet it is certain, that after he came to maturity of Thinking and Judging, he became, as he found reaſon, in many things, of a different Judgment from the Notions and Sentiments he had firſt received; by which it appeared, that his* Religion *was the Religion of his Judgment, and not of his Education. And being no Eccleſiaſtick, but a Man of a Civil Employment, he ſtood fair to be looked upon as an Indifferent Judge, and not as an Advocate or Party, (as Clergy-men generally are reputed by ſome) and, by conſequence, his Writings upon ſuch Subjects, beſides the weight of his Reaſon, would have a double Weight of Authority, (if we take in his Example too) above others, to make them ſucceſsful upon ſuch as have received prejudice from the Scandalous Practices of too many Profeſſors and Preachers of the Chriſtian Religion; which hath been a* principal Cauſe *of* Atheiſm *heretofore, and of* Deiſm *at preſent, and of the* Contempt of the Clergy, *and more effectual and prevalent than any of thoſe which have been aſſigned in Print; though by* Scandalous, *I intend here*

here nothing but Zeal for Preferments, and a cold Indifferency in Matters of Religion. For as it hath been rightly observed, When Vertue fails in the Priests, Faith will fail in the People; *be their Preaching what it will. Now, by how much greater was the Advantage that the Writings of this Man had above others, to have done Service in this Cause, so much the greater was the Gratification which these Wicked Spirits received in the Suppression of them.*

I know nothing so sordid that ever appeared in his Life. But that this hath been ordered by the Malice and Subtilty of those Wicked Spirits, who had gotten Advantage against Him, or his Family; (however some particular Dispositions in Persons might make it more feasible) as I verily believe, so I am well satisfied, he would not at all have doubted, had he been living, and to have spoken his Judgment in a like Case. He and I both, before he died, had had Experience enough to satisfie us concerning such matters. And I wish his, and all other Families, who are fallen into any such Snare, may consider well of it, and be well advised how to recover themselves out of it, if it may be. Many such have I known, and though the Burden be sealed upon some, and the Decree fixed, yet in others there seemed to be a Door open, if Opportunity was not neglected. Mens Belief or Disbelief will not alter the Truth of things: But Disbelief of things that are true is often the Cause of

great Unhappineſs: and they who disbelieve ſuch things as theſe, are not the leſs obnoxious to their Malice, but more ſecure in their Power. So much as this is not impertinent to be ſaid concerning the Malice and Subtlety of the Evil Spirits, *before a* Diſcourſe *of the Gracious Conduct of the* Good. *And I think my ſelf ſpecially obliged to declare my Sentiments of both, upon any juſt Occaſion. And, indeed,*

I confeſs the Preface *was not written ſo much for the ſake of the* Book, *as the* Book *Publiſhed for the ſake of the* Preface, *as an Occaſion to write on that Subject, which I thought my ſelf obliged to do, as an Act of Penitence for an Unhappy Miſcarriage, whereby my Enemy got that Advantage againſt me, which I mentioned before, and ſhall here repeat in the Words then Printed, as followeth:*

'*I muſt not here forbear upon this Occaſion*
'*to add, not my Opinion, but my own certain Know-*
'*ledge, upon great, and long, and in ſome reſpects*
'*in a great meaſure woful Experience, in an Hum-*
'*ble Confeſſion of my Fault, to give Glory to God,*
'*Teſtimony to his Truth, and Warning to Men. I*
'*have had Experience of this* Divine Conduct,
'*and of the* Bleſſings and Curſes *attending Obe-*
'*dience and Diſobedience to it; ſo that I have*
'*plainly perceived that the Conduct of the Chil-*
'*dren of* Iſrael *out of* Egypt *through the Wilder-*
'*neſs into the Promiſed Land, was a viſible Ma-*
'*nifeſtation*

'nifestation or Representation of the Secret Spi-
'ritual Conduct of Souls out of Slavery under the
'Powers of Darkness, through the Wilderness of
'this World, into the Land of Rest: and the very
'same thing in Action and Representation, which
'is delivered by way of Doctrine and Admonition
'in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, iv. 11,---20. and
'vi. 18,---31. The Crosses, Disappointments, and
'Afflictions, which I have gone through, have
'been very grievous, and many of them known to
'the World, though nothing hath appeared in my
'Life, to which they could be imputed by others
'as a Cause in any respect. I must therefore de-
'clare, that while I did act in a ready Compliance
'with that Conduct, I not only had great Peace
'and Serenity of Mind, but all things went strangely
'prosperous and successful with me; and I had
'extraordinary Answers to my Prayers, not only
'for my self, but for others also: But whenever
'I have done contrary, I always had trouble in my
'Mind, and what I did, was either blasted, or un-
'successful, and often of such evil Consequence, as
'I did not foresee. This I have found so, by great
'and long Experience, and in some of the great
'Businesses of my Life, wherein I acted not only
'upon my own Reason and Judgment, but also upon
'the Advice and Persuasions of very considerable
'Persons. And after considerable Experience of
'this, I was once so unhappy in my Disobedience to
'this Conduct, upon a special Occasion, having none

'to

'to adviſe with, and yielding too much to the Sen-
'timents of our Anti-enthuſiaſts, which was a
'Temptation to me, that (as I have ſpecial reaſon
'to believe) it was like the Sin of Adam to me,
'an Inlet unto all the Unhappineſs that hath ſince
'befallen me and my Family: And I have been
'as it were turned back into the Wilderneſs ever
'ſince. The Things wherein I had this Conduct
'were not matter of Duty in themſelves, or not in
'the particular Circumſtances; but either were
'ſuch as were in Humane appearance ſo indifferent,
'that I might have uſed my Liberty, or the Con-
'duct was much different from the Wiſdom of the
'World. And though I cannot ſay whether the
'Afflictions I have ſuffer'd were ſo ordered as a
'Puniſhment for my Miſcarriage, yet I am aſſur'd
'they were a Conſequence thereof, at leaſt ſuch
'as we often fall into, when we neglect the Good
'Counſel of our Friends. And they have been ſuch,
'as I am perſuaded it is my Duty upon this Occa-
'ſion to make this publick Penitential Confeſſion,
'whatever Prejudice I may ſuffer thereby from
'Men: If I can but thereby obtain the Favour of
'God, and benefit Men, I ſhall accept that as part
'of my Puniſhment.

'For the Certainty of this, I can truly affirm,
'That I had immediately upon my Miſcarriage as
'ſenſible Notice of the Evils which have ſince be-
'fallen me, as I can have of any thing by any ſenſe
'I have; as plain as if a Sentence had been pro-

'nounced

'nounced against me. And what I have suffered, 'hath had Two several Marks as exactly agreeable 'to my Miscarriage, as the print of a Seal upon 'the Wax to the Seal it self. I cannot say but 'other Sins or Miscarriages might be Ingredients 'in this Case: but I know full well that this was 'the Inlet unto all those Evils, which I am satis-'fy'd had been prevented, had I continued at that 'time in the way I was in. And it often recalls 'to my mind part of the Eighty first Psalm, and 'other Passages of the Old Testament, which have 'been fulfilled in my Case; and therefore I have 'great reason upon such an Occasion to confess my 'Fault, that I may have other more comfortable 'Passages made good to me hereafter.

'And here I cannot but remember, that I scarce 'knew the Man at that time to consult with in 'these things, who was not more likely to have put 'me out of the way, than to have directed me aright, 'how to proceed in it. And this I note for the 'sake of such Spiritual Guides as are consulted 'in such Cases: If they be not very careful and 'considerate to avoid the Common Errors on both 'sides, and neither incourage nor discourage the 'Attendance to such Impulses and Impressions, '&c. in general, but carefully endeavour to di-'stinguish and to direct aright, they may bring 'great Trouble upon those who consult them, (as 'I have known some do;) and perhaps greater 'upon themselves, when they are call'd to give

'Account

Account of their Stewardſhip, either here or hereafter.

Thus far was printed before: to which I muſt now add: Whether theſe things (as perhaps ſome others) were not permitted to befall me for Admonition to others, I know not: but this I know by Experience in others, *and even while this is Printing, that there is great need of* Good Admonition. *For I find, by divers ſuch* Experiences, *that God is pleaſed at this time to give ſome ſenſible* Notices *of his Conduct to many, who are in ſome ſort in the Caſe of* Samuel, 1 *Sam.* 3. 7. *who then* did not know the Lord, neither was the Word of the Lord yet revealed to him; *and when they come to the Prieſt, who ſhould be as* Eli *to them, to direct them how to behave themſelves, are by him put quite out of the Way, and either diſmiſſed to the Phyſician, to be cured of Melancholy; or adviſed to ſome cheerful innocent Converſation; or to mind their Buſineſs in their Callings; or to reject the Impreſſions they feel as Fancies, and vain Fears and Scruples. And many Caſes there are, wherein ſome of theſe Directions might be proper; but there are many others, wherein they are all quite out of the Way; and wherein great* Faults *have been, to my knowledge, and, I doubt, are daily committed by Learned, and otherwiſe able and good Men; partly through Ignorance in theſe Matters, or common Prejudice againſt them; partly for fear of incouraging what they ſee many abuſe to their own hurt,*

and

and to the Scandal of others; and partly for fear of bringing upon themſelves the Cenſure and Reproach of inclination to Fanaticiſm or Enthuſiaſm; and thereby at once the Grace and ſpecial Favour of God is rejected, the poor Soul greatly diſappointed, at leaſt, if no worſe happen to it; and the Director muſt be accountable for both.

But to make a matter of ſo great Importance the more plain, it may not be amiſs to propoſe an inſtance or two of ſome Caſes: *A Perſon wants an* Employment, *and an Employment is offered; but the Perſon hath ſtrong Impreſſions, either not to accept it, or not to continue it, being otherwiſe ſupplyed for the preſent; and thereupon repairs to ſome noted Divine for Advice: The Divine conſiders that the Perſon needs an Employment, and upon Examination can diſcover nothing unlawful in the Employment, nor unfit for the Perſon; and thereupon confidently adviſeth to reject the Impreſſion, and embrace and continue the Employment. Such Advice as this proves, in the event, to one, unſucceſsful all his time; to another, his Ruine and Undoing as to his Temporal Eſtate; to another, the Occaſion of the Loſs of his Life; and to another, the hazard, if not loſs, of his Soul; and all this by ſuch Means and Occaſions as could not be foreſeen or diſcovered by any Mortal; but are plainly ſeen and foreſeen by ſome kind inviſible Friends concerned for us.*

Again,

Again, a young Woman, *who is not at all proud, if we will believe her, only she desires to be like other Folks; but she finds something within her that tells her, or suggests, that she'll be damned if she wear such a Dress. Hereupon she goes for Advice to a Divine. He being more cautious in such cases, tells her, that since she may both lawfully and decently wear another meaner or plainer, she should have a care that she doth not reject such Motions in her Mind: For many times things which are not damnable Sins in themselves, may be Occasions and Inlets to such as are, and Hindrances of Graces, and so produce such unhappy consequence at last. But not liking this Advice, away she goes to another of greater note; and he tells her, that since that Dress is not unlawful, it cannot be a Damnable Sin to wear it; and therefore whatever it was, it could not be the Spirit of God that did so fright her; but she must have a care of such things, lest she run into Fanaticism, and I know not what. And this she likes and follows till the tricking up of her Natural Beauty proves a Snare to her self and others; the kind Impressions, which she formerly had upon occasion, cease; her Devotion grows cool, and she relapseth again into the common Course of the World, and what will be the end of it, God knows.*

What I have had experience of in my self and my own Family, partly for want of due regard to such Notices, and too much yielding to Motives of Moral Prudence; and partly by such unhappy Re-

solutions

ſolutions of Caſes by others, would be too long to relate particularly. I have had no leſs than four Sons *undone in this City, all as likely Youths as any, and all, after their diſappointments, by their Behaviour gaining the Favour and Kindneſs of all they converſed with: and in the placing of them ſpared neither Coſt, nor Pains, nor Care, and took the beſt Advice I could have; at firſt made choice of ſuch for Maſters, as I expected to act upon Principles of Religion; afterward, ſuch as I expected Friendſhip, at leaſt Moral Honeſty and Humanity from them; but was diſappointed in all. And I know aſſuredly that all did proceed from ſuch Cauſes as I have in general mentioned already; and had notice of it in general before.*

It is a great Unhappineſs to this Church and Nation at this time, that we have ſo few of any conſiderable Experience in theſe things, eſpecially among thoſe, who ſhould be Guides to others. And it is their Great Sin, and, without due Repentance, will prove Damnation to many, that they have been ſo bug-beared by a fluttering, Sadducean, Atheiſtical Humour, and baſe prudential Compliance of ſome of greater Name than genuine Chriſtian Vertue, as to be aſhamed or afraid to aſſert, or own ſo great and noble a Principle of the Religion they profeſs. And therefore, beſides my own ſpecial Obligations, and concern for the Honour and Service of God, and of our Holy Religion, Pity to the many Souls, which I perceive deſtitute of true Spiritual Direction, and

Indig-

Indignation at the Baſeneſs, Folly and Madneſs of ſo many Prudentialiſts amongſt us, hath made me for ſome time to long for an Opportunity to bear my Teſtimony in the Caſe. The Motive in my collecting the other Diſcourſe, (*which, though written laſt, and by the by, according to its proper order, is here firſt*) *was to detect a Miſapplication of Truth, and retort his Argument againſt himſelf, who had ſo groſsly and rudely treated the Buſineſs of Fanaticiſm, without due regard to that Sacred Principle of Religion, which is pretended in it; or to the moſt noble and heroick Profeſſors and Obſervers of it. But in this degenerate Age God hath not left himſelf without Witneſs, but raiſed up ſome of a more generous Spirit; ſuch as Mr.* Smith *of* Cambridge, *the late profound Dr.* Cradoc, *whom I much eſteemed for his Generoſity, as well as Judgment, in Preaching up this Doctrine, who told me, he had Preached* 20 *or* 30 *Sermons upon it; and that if we deny that, we may burn our Bibles; for he knew not* (*he ſaid*) *what Religion would ſignifie without it; and the Learned Mr.* Matthew Scrivener, *who hath left us a Diſcourſe concerning* Myſtical Divinity, *Intituled,* The Method and Means to a true Spiritual Life, *and others; to ſay nothing of ſome I know now Living, whoſe number I pray God increaſe, and make them perfect and compleat in all Graces and Vertue, to his Honour and Glory, and the Happineſs of this Church and Nation.*

THE

OF THE Antiquity, Tradition, *and* Succeſſion, of Myſtical Divinity Among the GENTILES, FROM THE Teſtimony & Confeſſion OF AN Eminent Adverſary.

AS *Adam* was the common Parent of all Man-kind from the Creation, ſo was *Noah* the common Parent of all Man-kind who have lived ſince the Flood. And of *Noah* it is recorded, that he *was a juſt Man, and perfect in his Generations*, and that he *walked with God*, Gen. 6. 9. And that he was 600 years Old when the Flood of Waters was upon the

Earth, *Gen.* 7. 6. From whence we may reasonably believe that he could not but be well acquainted with all the Knowledge of his Anceſtors. And what this *Walking with God* doth imply, we may underſtand from the reſt of the Hiſtory, and the Apoſtles Obſervation, *Heb.* 11. 7. *viz.* not only a careful Obſervance of all the General Rules of Righteouſneſs tranſmitted from *Adam* to his Poſterity, but a ready Obedience and Conformity to all ſpecial Declarations and Manifeſtations of the Will of God to him. Inſtances of which are thoſe Commands of God, and his Obedience thereunto; in *Building the Ark*, which undoubtedly expoſed him to much trouble, by Queſtions concerning it, and to various Cenſures, *Gen.* 6. 14, 22. He *did*, notwithſtanding, *according to all that God commanded him, ſo did he*; and in *going into it* with the ſeveral ſorts of Creatures, *Gen.* 7. 1, 5, 7, 9. and in *going out again* at the Command of God, *Gen.* 8. 16, 18. In his Walking with God in this manner, he could not but, beſides all the *Knowledge* which he had received from his Anceſtors, learn much more by the immediate Teachings of God. And it is not to be queſtioned, but, as he was inſtructed by his Anceſtors, ſo he was careful to inſtruct his Family & Poſterity in all neceſſary Knowledge; amongſt which, that of *Walking with God* was ſome of the chief. And this being ſo, I ſee no reaſon,

Why

Why other Nations should not have derived their Knowledge, with their Descent, directly from *Noah*? or, Why we should suppose the other Branches of his Posterity to have all received their Knowledge, of Divine and Sacred things especially, collaterally from that of *Abraham*, rather than directly and lineally from their common Ancestor *Noah*. As *Noah* offered Sacrifice, *Gen.* 8. 20. and *Abraham* offered Sacrifice; so we find *Priests* and *Sacrifices* among other Nations. Such was *MELCHIZEDECK*, a Priest of the most High God, *Gen.* 14. 18. And certainly it was by Revelation from God, or some Divine Means, that *PHARAOH* understood that it was because of *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s Wife, that the Lord plagued him and his House, *Gen.* 12. 17. as we find it expressed afterward in the like Case of *ABIMELECH*, *Gen.* 20. 3, 6. *God came to Abimelech in a Dream by Night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead Man, for the Woman which thou hast taken: for she is a Man's Wife.* And another *PHARAOH* acknowledged *Joseph* to be a Man, in whom was the Spirit of God, *Gen.* 41. 38. and when he raised him to the greatest Preferment in the Kingdom, gave him for a Wife the Daughter of an *Egyptian Priest*, ibid. *v.* 45. And *Moses* Married the Daughter of a *Priest of Midian*, *JETHRO*, Ex. 2. 16, 21. who was a good Man, and a Worshipper of the true God;

as appears, *Ex.* 18. 9, 10, 12. And the Means then *to Inquire of the Lord* were common to them, and to other Nations: As *REBEKAH*, *Gen.* 25. 22. So *BALAAM*, *Numb.* 22. 8, 9, 18, 19, 20. 23. 4. went to inquire of the Lord, and received Answers from Him. And about this time *JOB* is believed to have lived, who was a Holy Man, and offered Sacrifices, and had Visions.

By these Instances, and others that might be noted, we may understand, that in those ancient times it was believed, in all Nations, that there were *Means*, whereby Men and Women might come *to have* some *Acquaintance and Communication with God*; and what these Means were, is well worth our Inquiry.

That the JEWS had anciently their Schools or *Colleges of Prophets*, we may observe in the Sacred Scriptures. And though what were their *Institutions*, and their *Instructions*, and *Orders* there prescribed, is not in the Scripture particularly related; yet in the Particulars mentioned they seem to have been much the same with what was practised by the Ancient Christian *Anchorets* and *Cœnobites*.

If we inquire amongst *other Nations* of most ancient Note and Fame for Knowledge in Divine matters, the *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* are the most considerable. And the Means recommended by them do so well agree with the *Mystical Divinity* delivered by divers Christians, that

that some Oppofers of this Divinity think they have sufficient ground to derive it from them; and supposing that a Prejudice to it, have taken the pains to do it. "If the CHALDAICK "ORACLES (saith one of considerable "Learning, Name, and Place) were still ex- "tant, which were frequently quoted by *Plo-* "*tinus*, *Jamblicus*, *Porphyrius*, and *Proclus*, (who "did wholly approve the *Chaldaick Theology*; "and from them in a great measure the Frag- "ments were preserved) we might more fully "manifest these things; yet as they are, they "give us sufficient ground to draw the Funda- "mentals of this Mystical Divinity from thence. "For they speak of *God's being united to the* "*Soul, by the Soul's clasping God to herself*; and "that *not by any act of the Understanding*, but *by* "*the Flower of the Mind*; (the very Phrase "used by *Proclus*, and the same which the My- "sticks call, the *Fund of the Spirit*;) *of the* "*Soul's being inebriated from God*, (which *Plo-* "*tinus* calls, *being drunk with the Divine Nectar*) "and *Psellus* explains, of *Divine Illuminations* "*and Extasies*; of *Abstraction from the Body*, and "*extending the Mind upwards*, and *hastening to* "*the Divine Light and the Beams of the Father*; "with several other passages to the same pur- "pose.

And for the EGYPTIANS, the same Author tells us, "That *Jamblicus*, in his Book

"of *the Egyptian Myſteries*, (which he writ in "anſwer to an Epiſtle of *Porphyry* to an "*Egyptian* Prieſt, and wherein *Proclus* ſaith that "he writ like a Man inſpir'd) diſcourſes at large "concerning *Divine Extaſies*, and *Viſions*, and "*Inſpirations*; in which he deſcribes the Perſons "juſt after the Myſtical way, as *no longer leading* "*a humane Life*, or *having any Operations of their* "*Senſes or Underſtanding, but their Mind and* "*Soul is only in the Divine Power, and not in their* "*own, being acted and poſſeſſed wholly by it.* Af-"terward he ſets down the ſeveral *Degrees* and "*Kinds* of thoſe; in ſome, they have only *Par-*"*ticipation*; in others, near *Communion*; and in "the higheſt of all, *Union.* In ſome of theſe, "he ſaith, *the Body wholly reſts, and ſometimes* "*breaks out into Singing, and all expreſſions of Joy:* "*ſometimes the Body is raiſed up from the Ground,* "(as M. *Tereſa* thought hers) *ſometimes it* "*ſwells into a greater bulk, and ſometimes the con-*"*trary.* Then he lays down *Rules* to know "Divine Inſpirations by: *viz.* by Enquiring, "*In what manner God appears? Whether an ap-*"*pearance of Fire come before Him? Whether* "*he fills up and acts the whole Soul, ſo that there* "*is a Ceſſation of all its own Acts?* For this he "makes the main Character of a Divine Inſpi-"ration, that *the Perſons are wholly taken up and* "*poſſeſſed by the Deity; from whence follows an* "*Extaſie and alienation of the Senſes: But if*

"either

"*either the Soul acts, or the Body moves, then,*
"he saith, *it may be a false Inspiration.* No Man
"can express himself more emphatically con-
"cerning *the Excellency of Contemplative Prayer*
"than *Jamblicus* doth: *This quickens the Mind,*
"*inlargeth its Capacity, opens the Secrets of the*
"*Divinity, and fits it for Conjunction and Union*
"*with God; and never leaves Men till it hath*
"*carried them to a State of Perfection; and by*
"*degrees doth alter and change Men, that it makes*
"*them put off Humane Nature, and bring them*
"*into such a State of Dei-formity, that they be-*
"*come Gods. The first degree of Prayer,* saith
"he, *brings to a State of Recollection, and hath*
"*some Divine Contact, which helps our Know-*
"*ledge: The second carries the Soul to a nearer*
"*Communion with God, and excites the Divine*
"*Bounty to freer Communications to it: But the*
"*third is the Seal of the ineffable Union, which*
"*makes our Mind & Soul to rest in God, as a Divine*
"*Port or Haven.* And he concludes his Book
"with saying, *That this Union with God is Man's*
"*greatest Perfection, and the End of all Religion*
"*among the* Egyptians; whose Mysteries his
"Design was to explain and vindicate. Many
"other Passages might be produced out of him,
"concerning *the Knowing of God by Divine Con-*
"*tact, and the Insufficiency of any Act of the*
"*Mind for this ineffable Union:* but these are
"enough to shew how well acquainted *Jamblicus*

"and (if we believe him) the *Egyptians* "were with the profoundeſt Secrets of *Myſtical* "*Divinity*.

There is a Book tranſlated out of *Arabick*, intituled, *Of Divine Wiſdom according to the* Egyptians, wherein are many things to this purpoſe; but our Author takes notice but of one paſſage in it, which he ſets down as the Words of *Plato*. But before we come to *Plato*, it is fit to be noted, that PYTHAGORAS and the PYTHAGORIANS could not but be well acquainted with this Myſtical Theology, though they did not ordinarily deliver it in ſuch expreſs terms; but in a more occult manner. For it is known & confeſſed, "That *Pythagoras* himſelf "was from his Youth greatly inclin'd to an Inqui- "ſition into Religious Rites and Myſteries: That "he travelled into *Egypt* to hear their Prieſts, was "there 22 Years, had recommendations from the "King to the Prieſts, and was permitted to ac- "quaint himſelf with all their Learning; entred "into the *Egyptian Adyta*, and was inſtituted in "things unexpreſſible touching the Gods; gave "himſelf exact Information concerning Perſons "and Things, not omitting any Perſon eminent "at any time for Learning, or any kind of Reli- "gious Rites; or any Place, where he conceived "he might find ſomewhat extraordinary: That "he went thence to *Babylon*, and continued there

"12 Years,

"12 Years, conversed with the most Eminent of "the *Chaldeans*, as also with the *Persian Magi*, "who entertained him very courteously, & gave "him insight into their more hidden Mysteries, "and Religious Rites; and, without doubt, with "the most Eminent for Knowledge of the *Jews*, "in both places; and likely enough, as *Selden* and "others think, with *Ezekiel* in particular.

"That he made *Theology*, or the Know-"ledge of God, the First most Universal "Being, the Centre of all his Philosophy: That "he was by way of Eminency call'd, ὁ Θεολόγος; "and his Philosophy, Θεολογία; because he "treated chiefly of God, his Nature and Worship: "That he was a great Devoto, or Advocate for "God, his Worship, and Sacred Institutes: That "the Confederation of his *Cœnobium* (for so they "called it) or College, had reference to some "Divine Temperament, and to Union with God, "and to Unity with the Divine Soul: That the "Institutions of *his Society* and Sect, for the Ad-"mission and Probation of Disciples, distinction of "Persons, Reverence to their Elders, Celibacie, "Communion of Goods, Retirement from the "World, &c. were very much the same with those "of the *Essæans*, and the *Christian Cœnobites* after-"ward: That of the differing Sects afterward "none did Pythagorize more than *Pluto*, especially "in Divine matters, as *Aristotle* and *Laertius* have "observed: yea, that the choicest of his Meta-

"physick

"phyſick Contemplations ſeem to be traduced "from *Pythagoras* and his Followers: and that "*Plotinus* did more clearly explicate the Princi-"ples of the *Pythagorick* Philoſophy, as well as of "the *Platonick*.

And from all this put together, we may very reaſonably conclude, eſpecially if we take in what is related by *Jamblicus*, That he continued 3 days and 2 nights, at one time, in the ſame Poſture, without taking either Meat, or Drink, or Sleep, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 3. That he muſt have been well acquainted with this Myſtick Theology, which was in ſuch Eſteem with both; thoſe, from whom he recieved Inſtructions; and thoſe, who received from him: and that in *Plotinus* and others, we read the *Pythagorick* as well as *Platonick* Principles; and that in both was a mixture of the *Judaick*, and what was derived by all from the Common Parent *Noah*. To this I will add only a Paſſage or two of his, out of *Demophilus*:

Being born of God, and rooted in Him, let us cleave to our Root. For the Streams of the Waters, and the Sprouts of the Earth, if they be cut off from their Root are dry'd up and wither away, p. 11. Is not this the very Doctrine of our Saviour, *The True Light, which lighteth every Man, who cometh into the World*, of being born of God, and abiding in the Vine?

It cannot by any means be, that one and the same Person should apply himself to Pleasures, to the Body, to the getting of Riches, and also to God. And is not this also the very Doctrine of our Saviour; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon?* But he goes on: *For he who is given to Pleasures, the same will also be careful for the Body; but he who is careful for the Body, he will also study to get Riches; and he, who studies to get Riches, will necessarily be Unjust: But he who is Unjust, is both impious toward God, and unjust toward Men; and therefore, although he sacrifice (whole) Hecatombs, he is (but) the more impious, and far from God and all Religion, and deliberately Sacrilegious: Wherefore it behoveth to avoid every voluptuary Person, as impious and sacrilegious,* p. 12.

You cannot well say that he is a happy Man, who relies upon Friends, or Children, or any transitory and fading thing; for all these are instable things: But to rely upon ones self and upon God, that only is firm and stable, p. 12.

A wise Man sent hither Naked, will naked (or stript of all) invoke Him, who sent him: for God hears him only, who is not incumbred with Impertinences, p. 9.

A Divine Sense (τὸ ἔνθεον φρόνημα) *solidly joyns us to God: For like must necessarily be joyned with like,* p. 9.

The same which I have said of *Pythagoras*, may

may in effect be ſaid of *SOCRATES* alſo, both as to the Diſpoſition of his Mind, as to his Travels for acquiring of Knowledge, and as to his Principles, from the Obſervations and Confeſſions of ſuch as were no Friends to *Myſtick Theology*: They were Scholars in the ſame Schools, and received the Tradition of the ſame Doctrine, as did *Plato* alſo from thence, and from them; ſo that I may diſpatch this in a few Obſervations of what is known and confeſſed concerning him.

"That he had as clear Notions as any touching "God, his Nature, Unity, and other Sacred My- "ſteries, which he could never have attained un- "to, but by ſome borrowed Tradition, *&c.* That "he aſſerted, That *Virtue* is neither by Nature, "nor by Teaching, but by Divine Inſpiration: "and that all true *Knowledge of God* comes by "Divine Infuſion; and called God his Tutor: "That while Man is ſubject to, and under the Im- "preſſion of Corporal Images, ſenſible Forms, "and terrene Affections, he is not rightly diſpoſed "for *Divine Contemplation*, which requires a Mind "defecated, *&c.* That Divine things and My- "ſteries cannot be comprehended but by a refined "Judgment, by ſuch as have their Souls abſtract- "ed from all Corporal Images, Impreſſions and "Affections; and therefore Men ſhould be very "intent on getting a Reformed Life, that the Mind "being exonerated of its depreſſing Luſts, might,

"by

"by a natural Vigour, lift up it self to Eternals, "and by that Purity of Intelligence, contemplate "the Nature of that Eternal Incommunicable "Light, where the Causes of all created Natures "live in Stability, *v. Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. 8. c. 3.* "And as to his own Life, That he instituted his "whole Life, even from his Childhood, by the "assistance of his Divine Inspiration, which he "called a *Dæmon*, a Voice, a Sign. And that "*Plato* reports of him that he stood a whole day "without any alteration in the same posture, his "Mind being abstracted with pure Contempla-"tion; and that *Favorinus* in *A. Gellius* saith that "he did this often.

And now to return to our principal Author, and the Words of *PLATO* in him, which are these: "*Being often in the Depth of Contemplation, "my Body being left behind, I seemed to enjoy the "Chief Good with incredible pleasure. Where-"fore I stood as it were astonished, finding my self "to be a part of the upper World, and to have ob-"tained Immortality, with the clearest Light; "which cannot be expressed with Words, nor heard "with Ears, nor understood by the Thoughts of "Men:* and then he describes *the Sadness he felt "at the decay of that glorious Light, and the "pleasure which returned with his former Ecsta-"sies.* The Words are: *At last my Intellect "being wearied with this Contemplation fell back "into phantasie, and then that Light failing I be-*

"came

"*came somewhat sad: But again having left my*
"*Body, returning thither again, I perceived my*
"*Mind abounding with Light, and that flowing*
"*then into the Body then raised above it.*

Nor of *Plato* himself doth our Author take any more notice then of that one passage; but of *the later Platonists*, *Plotinus*, *Jamblicus*, *Porphrygius*, and *Proclus*, who, as he saith out of *Psellus*, did wholly approve of the *Chaldaick Theology*: he gives us some larger Tasts; and particularly,

"The short account of *Plotinus his Hypothesis*,
"is this; *That the Soul of Man being immersed*
"*in the Body suffers very much by reason of its*
"*Union with it; by which means it is drawn to*
"*the Affections of the Body, and to a Conversation*
"*with Sensible things, and so becomes Evil and*
"*Miserable: That its Good and Happy Condition*
"*lyes in being like to God, not in regard of Under-*
"*standing, but a State of Quiescency: That the*
"*Practice of the Virtues of the Active Life is*
"*insufficient for Assimilation to God; but in order*
"*to it, those which are properly Intellectual are*
"*most necessary, whereby the Soul draws it self off*
"*from the Body. Thus for the Soul to act by its*
"*self, is Wisdom; Introversion, is Temperance;*
"*Abstraction from Matter, is Fortitude; to follow*
"*Reason, is Justice: That by the Practice of these*
"*the Soul purifies its self, i. e. casts off the things*
"*without its self, and so recovers its Purity, by*

"*bringing*

"*bringing those things into Light again, which lay*
"*hid under the rubbish of Sensible things before;*
"*so that the Soul did not know them to be there;*
"*but for the Discovery of them, it was necessary for*
"*the Soul to come near a greater Light than its*
"*self: and to bring the Images which are in it to*
"*the true Originals.* The way of *Purifying the*
"*Soul*, he calls by the Names of *Abstraction*
"and *Recollection*; which he else-where expresses
"by *awakening the Soul out of Sleep, wherein it*
"*was disturbed by Sensible Images*; not as though
"the Soul had need of any other way of Pu-
"rifying, but only *restraining it to its self by*
"*taking away that load of Matter which oppressed*
"*it; and then it naturally endeavours after the*
"*nearest Union with the first Being; which he*
"*calls the True Being, and the Super-Essential*
"*Being.* And he saith, *When the Soul endea-*
"*vours after this Union, it must lay aside all sen-*
"*sible and intellectual Images of things, and make*
"*use only of the purest and supream part of the*
"*Mind*; (or the Fund of the Spirit) *that God*
"*then is not to be considered under the Notion of*
"*Being, but as something above Being; and that*
"*we are not either to affirm or deny any thing of*
"*Him*: that, *Our Contemplation of Him is not by*
"*Knowledge, or any Intellectual Operation; but by*
"*a Divine Presence, which far exceeds any Know-*
"*ledge*: for *Knowledge*, he saith, *hinders Union*:
"*therefore we must go beyond Knowledge, and be*

"*abstracted*

"*abstracted from all other Objects; and be united*
"*to Him only by the Power of Divine Love;*
"*from whence follows a clearer Light in the Soul:*
"*And in this State,* saith he, *there is not only a*
"*Cessation of Passion, but of Reason and Under-*
"*standing too: neither is the Person himself,*
"ἀλλ' οὔτε ἀρπαζόμενος καὶ ἐνθουσιάζων, *like one in a Rap-*
"*ture or an Extasie he enjoys God in that State of*
"*Quiescency, as in a silent Wilderness;* which he
"calls, *being in God;* and in other places, *seeing*
"*God in themselves, being the same with God,*
"*being one with God;* and which is the highest
"of all, *being God:* which is the perfect *State*
"*of Dei-formity.*

Of *Porphyry*, who was a Disciple and Confident of *Plotinus*, the same Author gives us this account: "That he looked upon *the Theurgick*
"*Way*, as lyable to deceit, and not capable of ad-
"vancing the Soul to highest Perfection. Which
"*Theurgick Way* lay in the initiating of Men in
"some Sacred Mysteries, by partaking of cer-
"tain Rites and Symbols, by which they were
"admitted to the Presence of some of their
"Deities; the End whereof, as they pretended,
"was, reducing the Souls of Men to that State
"they were in before they came into the Body.
"So St. *Austin* tells us from *Porphyry*, *That they*
"*who were purified after this manner did converse*
"*with glorious appearances of Angels, which they*
"*were fitted to see:* but *Porphyry* himself, as he

"did

"did not utterly reject this Lower and Symbo-
"lical way; so he said, *That the Highest Per-*
"*fection of the Soul was not attainable by it; but*
"*it was useful for purifying the Lower part of the*
"*Soul, but not the Intellectual.* By the Lower
"part he understood the Irrational, which by
"the Theurgical Rites might be fitted for Con-
"versation with Angels; but the Intellectual
"part could not be elevated by it to the *Contem-*
"*plation of God*, and the *Vision of the things that*
"*are true.* And herein he placed *the utmost*
"*Perfection of the Soul* in its return to and Union
"with God in this upper part, or Fund of the
"Soul: for the utmost the other attained to,
"was only to live among the Ætherial Spirits;
"but the Contemplative Souls returned to the
"Father, as he speaks, which, as many other of
"his Notions, he borrowed from the *Chaldaick*
"*Theology.* To shew what this Intellectual or
"Contemplative Life was, that should bring
"Mens Souls to this State of Perfection, *Por-*
"*phyry* writ a Book on purpose, *Of the Return of*
"*the Soul*, as St. *Austin* tells us, who quotes
"many passages out of it; and this particular Pre-
"cept above all the rest, *That the Soul must fly*
"*from all Body, if it would live Happy with God:*
"which is all one with *Abstraction of Mind*, and
"*pure Contemplative Life.* In that Book he com-
"plains that there was no Perfect Way yet
"known to the World for this End; not the *In-*

"*dian, Chaldaick*, or any other. But what that
"was which he meant, appears by what he ſaith
"near the end of the Life of *Plotinus*, where he
"hath theſe Words: *The Scope and End of his*
"*Life was Union and Conjunction with God over*
"*all: and four times*, ſaith he, *when I was with*
"*him he attained to this Union, by an unexpreſſi-*
"*ble Act of the Mind:* which he before ſets
"forth, by *a Divine Illumination without any I-*
"*mage or Idea, being above the Underſtanding*
"*and all intelligible things.* And he ſaith of
"himſelf, *that he was once in this State of Union,*
"*when he was* 68 *Years of Age.* Which *Hol-*
"*ſtenius* underſtands of an Extaſie he then fell
"into; and imputes it to *the depth of his Me-*
"*lancholy joyned with his abſtracted and ſevere*
"*Life, his frequent Watchings, and almoſt conti-*
"*nual Exerciſe of Contemplation.* For all theſe
"things were remarkable in him: and *Eunapius*
"ſaith of him, *That he was ſo little a lover of*
"*the Body, that he hated his being a Man; and*
"*being in* Sicily, *he was almoſt famiſhed by Ab-*
"*ſtinence, and ſhunned all Converſation with Man-*
"*kind:* as he begins the Life of *Plotinus*; *That*
"*he was like one aſhamed that his Soul was in a*
"*Body.* So that we find the Foundation here
"laid, (ſaith our Author) not only for the
"*Myſtical Union*, but the *Abſtraction of Mind*
"neceſſary in order to it: and that it doth not
"lye in any *Intellectual Operations*, but rather

"in

" in a *Cessation of these Acts*, is likewise expressly " affirmed by *Porphyry*. *Many things*, saith he, " *are said of Understanding things that are above* " *the Mind; but the Contemplation of those things* " *is better performed*, ἀνοησία κρεῖττον νοήσεως, *otio &* " *vacatione Intellectus*, as *Holstenius* renders it, " rather *by the Rest and Cessation of Operation in* " *the Understanding, than by the Exercise of it*; " *as many things, while a Man wakes, are said of* " *him that he does when he sleeps, but the Know-* " *ledge and Perception of them is by Sleep; for* " *things are best understood by Assimilation.* And " elsewhere he saith, *That our manner of Under-* " *standing all things is different according to their* " *Essence; those things above the Mind are to be* " *known*, ἀγνοήσει τε καὶ ὑπερθέσει, *in the way of un-* " *knowing, and after a super-essential manner*; " where we see the very Phrases of *Dionysius* used " by him; and in many places he speaks of *the* " *Minds abstracting and loosing it self from the* " *Body, and drawing it self nearer to the First* " *Being*; of *the Souls being in God*; of *the pure* " *and clear Light, which follows the Abstraction of* " *the Mind*; of *the State and Life of Contem-* " *plation, and the Virtues necessary thereto; such* " *as Abstinence from the Actions of the Body, and* " *from Affections to it, which*, saith he, *raise the* " *Mind to the super-essential Being.* And he very " much disparages the *Active* and *Political Life* in " comparison with this; *the End of one, being only*

"*Mens living according to Nature; but of the o-*
"*ther, Aſſimilation to God: He that lives accord-*
"*ing to Practical Virtues, is only a Good Man;*
"*but he that lives the Life of Contemplation, is a*
"*God.* From whence we underſtand the Dei-
"formity of the Myſtical Divines, being attain-
"able by the Life of Contemplation. The Way
"laid down by him for *Purifying the Soul* is this:
"1. *The Foundation* of it is for the *Soul to know*
"*it ſelf*, i. e. to conſider, *that it is in a ſtrange*
"*place, and bound to a thing of another Subſtance.*
"2. *Recollection*, or *gathering it ſelf up from the*
"*Body, to be free from the Affections of it:* In
"order to which he adviſeth to deny the Body
"in its Appetites and Pleaſures, and to ſhew as
"little Care of it, and Concernment for it, as
"may be: by degrees to leſſen all ſenſe both of
"Pleaſure and Pain; and ſo to come at laſt to
"a Freedom from the Paſſions of the Body. Then
"he deſcribes *the Superlative Being*, and ſaith,
"that *it is neither Great, nor Little, but above*
"*both; and is neither Greateſt nor Leaſt, but above*
"*all; and that his Preſence is not Topical, but*
"*Aſſimilative; and that the only Way for our Souls*
"*to recover themſelves, is, to bring them into them-*
"*ſelves; by which Means the True Being is preſent*
"*with them, and we become united to God.* Which
"*Union of the Soul with God*, *Holſtenius* thinks
"it very probable that *Porphyry* underſtood by
"the Book which he mentions in the Life of

"*Plotinus*,

"*Plotinus*, called, ὁ ἱερὸς γάμος, the *Sacred Nup-*
"*tials*, because both *Plotinus* and he supposed this
"Union to be wrought by the Power of *Divine*
"*Love*, as well as the Mystical Divines; and
"*Porphyry* saith, upon the reading of it, *some*
"*thought him Mad, because there were several*
"*things spoken in it after a Mystical and Enthusi-*
"*astical manner*; for which he was highly ap-
"plauded by *Plotinus*.

Jamblicus was *Porphyry*'s Disciple, but out of him our Author recites no more than what is set down before concerning the *Egyptian Mysteries*: but out of *PROCLUS*, another Platonick Philosopher, who lived long after these, and of whom *Marinus* gives this Character, towards the Conclusion of his Life, "*That his Soul*
"*was so recollected and drawn into its self, that it*
"*seemed to be separated from the Body while it*
"*remained in it*; he hath this passage: In the
"beginning of his *Theology*, saith he, he distin-
"guisheth between *that Intellectual Faculty in*
"*us, whereby we are capable of Understanding the*
"*Nature and Difference of Intelligible Idea's, and*
"*that which he calls* τὴν ἀκρότητα τοῦ νοῦ καὶ (ὡς φασι) τὸ ἕν θεῖον,
"*the Summity, as the Mysticks speak, and pure*
"*Fund of the Spirit, which*, he saith, *is alone ca-*
"*pable of the Divine and Mystical Union*; so he
"calls it, ἀπόῤῥητον ἕνωσιν. *For*, saith he, *though*
"*there be many Intellectual Powers in us, yet it is*
"*by this only that we can be united to the Divinity,*

"and be made partakers of it. For we cannot "reach the Divine Being either by our Senſes, or "by Opinion, or by Apprehenſion; no nor yet by Ra- "tiocination, ὑπὲρ νόησιν καὶ λόγον. It remains there- "fore, that if the Divine Nature can any ways be "known by us, it muſt be by the Eſſence of the "Soul. For the Soul being drawn into its own "Unity, and removing from it ſelf the Multipli- "city of its Powers, it aſcends to the greateſt "height of true Contemplation. While the Soul "looks about on things below it, it ſees nothing but "Shadows and Images of things: When it comes "to a State of Introverſion, then it ſees its own "Eſſence and Operations of the Underſtanding: "But when it ſearches deeper, then it finds the "Mind within it ſelf, and the ſeveral Orders of "real Beings: When it goes yet farther into the "moſt ſecret Cloſet of the Soul, there it contemplates, "as it were blindfold, the Divine Beings, and the "firſt Idea's or Unities of Beings. And this, ſaith "he, is the moſt excellent Operation of the Soul, in "the Reſt or Quieſcency of its Powers, to ſtretch it "ſelf toward the Divine Nature, and dance, as it "were, round it, and to raiſe up the whole Soul to- "wards this Union with it, and abſtracting it ſelf "from all Inferior Beings, to reſt upon, and be con- "joyned with that Ineffable and Super-eſſential "Being. And by this means the Soul comes to "have the trueſt Underſtanding of all things.

"All

"All *theſe Notions*, (ſaith our Author) both "among the *Chaldeans*, and the *Platonick* Phi-"loſophers, are *built upon a very ancient Hypo-"theſis*, but very different from that of Chriſtiani-"ty; which Hypotheſis being granted, this My-"ſtical Divinity appears with ſome face of Rea-"ſon, and colour of Probability.— It was this; "That the Souls of Men did exiſt in another "World long before they came into the Body; "that in their Deſcent to the Body they had an "Ætherial Vehicle joyned to them; which up-"on the conjunction of the Soul and Body be-"came the Means of Communication between "them, and takes up its chief Seat in the Brain, "which is the ſame which we call the Imaginati-"on: that the Soul being in this ſtate is apt to be "much inveigled with Kindneſs to the Body, and "ſo forget its Return home: that the Body is ca-"pable of doing the Soul miſchief no other way, "being it ſelf under the power of Fate, then as "it draws it downward: that the Mind, being "the upper part of the Soul, is always acting; "but we know not its operations but only by the "Impreſſions they make upon the Phanſie: that "the Mind hath the true Idea's of things within "it ſelf; but we are deceived by the Repreſen-"tations conveyed by our Imagination; and "therefore our Ratiocination is very ſhort and "uncertain: that our only way of Recovering "our Souls, is by drawing them off from the

"Body, and retiring into themſelves; and that "upon this the Mind hath the Divine Being ſo "nearly conjoyned to it, that it paſſeth into a "Divine Nature, and recovers its former State, "when it parts from the Body. But becauſe it "is not to return alone without the Ætherial "Vehicle it brought with it, therefore the *Chal-* "*deans* and *Egyptians* had ſeveral Sacred and "Symbolical Rites for the purifying of the Ve- "hicle, as they called it, which they made ne- "ceſſary for this End: and with them *Jamblicus* "joyns, but *Porphyry* thought them not ne- "ceſſary, but that Philoſophy and meer Con- "templation would purifie enough without it. "This is the true Account of their Hypotheſis, "as may be fully ſeen in *Hierocles* and *Syneſius*, "without going farther; and was the *firſt Foun-* "*dation of Myſtical Divinity*, which I will not "deny to be well enough accommodated to it. "But it is as *remote* from Chriſtianity, as the "*Hypotheſis* it ſelf is.

This is ſaid by our Author to diſparage *Myſtical Divinity*; becauſe he ſuppoſeth it will not be conſented to by any that are Friends to it. But how doth it appear that this *Hypotheſis* was the firſt Foundation of *Myſtical Divinity*; which, for any thing he hath ſhewed to the contrary, may be more ancient than it? His bare affirmation in his own Caſe certainly is not to be admitted for Proof. But in caſe that were admitted,

mitted, how is that *different* from Chriſtianity; for he would not ſay *contrary*; though, no doubt, many of his Readers would be apt to take it ſo? The *Jews* did believe it before our Saviour's time; the *Apocrypha* doth favour it; the *Apoſtle's* Queſtion concerning *the Man, who was born Blind*, doth favour it; nor doth *our Saviour's Anſwer* at all contradict it, but rather ſuppoſe it: and it hath been aſſerted by Learned Men, both of the *Church of England* and other *Proteſtants*, from Proofs of Scripture, as well as Reaſon. His Concluſion alſo is obſervable, that *Myſtical Divinity* is as *remote* from *Chriſtianity*, as the *Hypotheſis* it ſelf; ſuch another cautious Expreſſion not to expoſe himſelf, but by which the generality of his Readers may eaſily be impoſed upon. Truth is a very venerable thing; and Divine matters ought to be treated with great Reverence; the very Heathen Myſticks would have thought ſo, whatever our Rationatiſts think.

Beſides theſe ancient Philoſophers, our Author takes notice of the like Notions and Practices among *other Gentiles*, even at this day; but of what antiquity amongſt them he ſaith not. It is taken from a *Letter of Monſieur Bernier* to Monſieur *Chaplain*, dated 4 *Octob.* 1667. concerning the *Gentiles of Indoſtan*, wherein he gives an account "of certain Orders of Religious "among them, who make Vows of Chaſtity, "Poverty, and Obedience, living in Convents "under

"under Superiors, who are commonly called "*Jauguis*, i. e. *united to God*, who uſed themſelves "to many Hardſhips, and were looked on as ſo "many Eremites by the People, being accounted "true Saints, illuminated and perfect *Jauguis*: "*Theſe are People that have entirely abandoned* "*the World, and ſequeſtered themſelves into ſome* "*very remote Corner or Garden, like Eremites,* "*without ever coming to the Town. If you carry* "*them any Meat, they receive it; if they do not,* "*'tis believed that they can live without it, and* "*ſubſiſt by the ſole Favour of God in perpetual* "*Faſting, Prayer, and profound Meditations: for* "*they ſink themſelves ſo deep into theſe Raptures,* "*that they ſpend many hours together in being in-* "*ſenſible, and beholding in that time, as they give* "*out, God himſelf, like a very bright and ineffable* "*Light, with an unexpreſſible Joy and Satisfaction,* "*attended with an intire Contempt and forſaking of* "*the World. For thus much one of them, that pre-* "*tended he could enter into this Rapture when he* "*pleaſed, and had been often in it, told me; and o-* "*thers that are about them affirm the thing with ſo* "*much ſeriouſneſs, that they ſeem to believe it in* "*earneſt, that there is no Impoſture in it.*

To theſe *others* might be added, who have had the like Notions, and uſed the like Exerciſes, as well anciently, as at this time. Such as the *Indian Brachmans* or *Gymnoſophiſts*, the *Perſian Magi*, and the *Druides*, who are ſaid by ſome to have

have been as ancient as *Abraham*'s time. The Character given by *Bardisanes Syrus* of the BRACHMANES, that they *neither worship Images, nor eat what is animate; neither drink Wine, or Beer; are far from all Malignity, attending wholly to God*; is comprehensive enough to take in both the Austerities and Contemplations of those before-mentioned. But the religious *Care* of the Ancients *to conceal their most Sacred Mysteries* from the Vulgar, and their communication of them principally by successive verbal Tradition, is a great reason that we have so little of this in any Writings, not only of the rest, whom we call *Heathens*, but even of the *Jews*, and *Christians*. However, it is plain by what is collected by our Author, that these Notions and Exercises were not first introduced by *Plotinus* and his Disciples, but derived to them from the *Egyptians*, and the *Chaldeans*. And if it be inquired from what *Original* they derived them, it will be hard to discover any other than either *Abraham* and his Posterity, as many assert; or at least the common Parent *Noah*; so that what our Author has collected to disparage *Mystical Theology*, being well considered, will prove a notable Recommendation of it. For as it is most reasonable to believe that *Noah* did instruct his Posterity in all things of greatest Importance to them; and that the Knowledge of them was transmitted to after-Generations, and in particu-

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lar to the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians* in ſome ſort or other; but to the *Jews* intirely, and without Mixture of Corruptions; ſo it is not to be doubted, but ſuch inquiſite Perſons, and eſpecially into Divine Myſteries, as *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, and *Plato*, Men of ſuch extraordinary qualifications, and ſo favoured as they were, muſt have obtained a compleat Knowledge of them from all theſe Nations; and eſpecially at that time, in and after the Captivity, when they ſeem by Divine Providence to have been carried away out of their own Countrey for that very end and purpoſe, that God's dealings with them might be more fully known to other Nations. For the Poſterity of *Abraham* was undoubtedly deſigned by Almighty God to be a Light and Admonition to the *Gentiles*, even from the beginning in all their various States; in *Egypt*, in the *Wilderneſs*, in the *Land of Canaan*, in their *Captivity*, and in their *Diſperſion* to this very day. Nor do I at all doubt but there was ſo much Knowledge of Truth derived from them to other Nations, as together with what is obſervable in the Works of God, and what was received from the Common Anceſtors, was ſufficient for the Salvation of all, who uſed and improved the ſame as they ought; and for the juſt Condemnation of the reſt, who neglected it. And therefore, if we find that theſe Men were acquainted with the *Myſtick Divinity*, that is, with the thing, whether

ther under that Name or any other, it matters not; if we find undeniable Evidence of it among the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, and others before; if we find the most ancient *Christian Ascetick*s well acquainted with it, and much, or rather altogether in the Practice of it, before *Dionysius* his *Theologia Mystica* was known in the World; this put together is such a Constellation of concurrent and corroborating Evidences, that whencesoever that Name, and some Terms and Expressions, which seem somewhat uncouth, came in after Ages, yet that the thing it self must have been derived from some very ancient common Original to those Nations; and to those *Christian Ascetick*s, not from the Collections of the Adversaries of Christianity, (which is a meer groundless Oratorical Fiction to expose it) no more than from *Dionysius*, whom our Author doth not believe to have been so ancient; but either from some of the first Converts of the *Jews*, or, which seems more likely, from a Divine Conduct and Inspiration: for they were many of them unacquainted with Humane Learning. Nor do I see any reason to think that the Institutions of *the Sons of the Prophets* among the *Jews* were much different from the *Mystical Theology*, which is thus opposed by our Author; but rather that the same Institutions were conveyed, as Secrets, by Tradition to some principal Men of all Nations, from the Common Parent *Noah*.

And

And indeed, if we do but fairly, that is candidly and without Prejudice, consider that Account of this Divinity, which our Author hath chosen for his purpose to collect from a late Author, Father *Austin Baker* and Mr. *Cressy's Preface*, I suppose it will sufficiently recommend it self, as no improper or unlikely Method to have been used by the ancient Prophets. "Let the Reader "judge of it (saith he, and so say I) by these "Passages in his (*viz.* Mr. *Cressy's*) Preface: "1. *The only proper Disposition towards receiving* "*Supernatural Irradiations from God's Holy Spi-* "*rit, is an Abstraction of Life; a Sequestration* "*from all Business that concerns others; and an* "*Attendance to God alone in the Depth of the Spi-* "*rit.* And a little after: 2. *The Lights here desired* "*and prayed for, are such as do expell all Images* "*of Creatures, and do calm all manner of Passions;* "*to the end the Soul being in a Vacuity, may be* "*more capable of receiving and entertaining God in* "*the pure Fund of the Spirit.* Thus far our Author out of Mr. *Cressy*. But I think fit to add to these two, the rest of his Characters of Divine Inspirations whereby they may be distinguished from *Fanaticism*. 3. *The Prayer here acknowledged to be the most effectual Instrument to procure Divine Light, is a Pure, Recollected, Intime* (or most inward) *Prayer of the Spirit.* 4. *Here are no new Speculative Verities or Revelations of Mysteries pretended; no private new-found-out*

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Interpretations of Scripture bragg'd of. 5. *Here the Eſtabliſhed Order of God's Church, and the Unity eſſential thereto is not prejudiced. Yea, the Inſpirations expected and obtained by Pure Internal Prayer do more firmly and unalterably fix Souls under this Obedience, and to this Order and Unity.* 6. *Our Lights teach us to attend only to God and our own Souls, and never to intereſs our ſelves in any Care or Imployment about others, till evidently God's Inſpirations force us, and External Authority obliges us thereto.* 7. *Our Lights make us to fear and avoid all Super-eminence and Judicature, all ſenſual Pleaſures, Deſires of Wealth, Honor,* &c. 8. *And laſtly, Our Lights, if they ſhould chance ſometimes to be miſtaken by us, no Harm at all would accrue to others, and not any conſiderable prejudice to our ſelves; becauſe, as hath been ſaid, the Matters in which they direct us, are in their Nature indifferent, and are ordered only toward a more perfect Loving of God, and withdrawing us from Creatures.* §. 33. The contrary or different Characters of phanatick falſe Lights, I paſs by for brevity ſake.

"Out of *Father Baker* himſelf he produceth "theſe amongſt others: *Such* (contemplative) "*Souls are not of themſelves much inclined to Ex-* "*ternal Works,* (*except* (ſaith Father *Baker*, "which our Author leaves out) *when God* "*calls them thereto by ſecret Inſpirations, or en-* "*gageth them therein by Command of Superiors*)

"*but*

"*but they seek rather to purifie themselves, and* "*inflame their Hearts to the Love of God by In-* "*ternal Quiet, and Pure Actuations in Spirit;* "*by a total Abstraction from Creatures; by Soli-* "*tude, both external and especially internal; so* "*disposing themselves to receive the Influxes and* "*Inspirations of God, whose* Guidance *chiefly they* "*endeavour to follow in all things.* * And, *The proper* "*End of a Contemplative Life is the attaining unto an* "*Habitual and almost uninterrupted perfect Union* "*with God in the supream point of the Spirit; and* "*such an Union as gives the Soul a Fruitive Pos-* "*session of him, and a real Experimental Perception* "*of the Divine Presence in the Depth and Centre of* "*the Spirit, whith is fully possessed and filled with* "*him alone; not only all deliberate Affections* "(saith Fa. *Baker*) *to Creatures being excluded,* "*but in a manner all Images of them also, at least* "*so far, as they may be distractive to the Soul.* And "he adds: *The Effects of this blessed Perceptable* "*Presence of God in Perfect Souls are unspeakable* "*and Divine: For he is in them both as a Principle* "*of all their Actions Internal and External, being* "*the Life of their Life, and Spirit of their Spirits;* "*and also as the End of them, directing both the* "*Actions and Persons to himself only. He is All in* "*all things unto them: A Light to direct securely* "*all their Steps, and to order all their Workings,* "*even those also which seem the most Indifferent;*

"*the*

* Tr. 1, S. 1, c. 2, §. 3.

"*the which, by the Guidance of God's Holy Spirit,*
"*do cause a farther Advancement of them to a yet*
"*more immediate Union. He is a Shield to pro-*
"*tect them in all Tentations and Dangers; an*
"*internal Force and Vigour within them to make*
"*them do and suffer all things, whatsoever his*
"*pleasure is they should do or suffer. They not*
"*only believe and know, but even feel and taste*
"*him to be the Universal Infinite Good. By means*
"*of a continual Conversation with him they are re-*
"*duced to a blessed State of a Perfect Denudation*
"*of Spirit, to an absolute Internal Solitude, a*
"*Transcendency and Forgetfulness of all created*
"*things, and especially of themselves, to an Hea-*
"*venly-mindedness and fixed Attention to God only,*
"*and this even in the midst of Employments to*
"*others never so distractive; and, finally, to a*
"*gustful Knowledge of his Infinite Perfections, and*
"*a strict Application of their Spirits by Love*
"*above Knowledge, joyned with a Fruition and*
"*Repose in Him with the whole extent of their*
"*Wills: So that they become after an inexpressi-*
"*ble manner Partarkers of the Divine Nature;*
"*yea, One Spirit, One Will, One Love with him,*
"*being in a sort Deified, and enjoying as much of*
"*Heaven here as Mortality is capable of.*

The special Means *for obtaining such spiritual and extraordinary Favours from God,* are doubtless very desirable to be known; and these our Author sets down in the Words of *O. N.* who

purposely writ in Answer to him upon this Subject, *viz.* (*besides a* watchful Guard, saith he, *for keeping the Conscience clean, as much as may be, not only from Mortal, but also Venial Sin*) *Much frequent and continued* Vocal *or* Mental *Prayer*; *much* Solitude, *and* Mortifications *of our Flesh*; *and* Abstraction *of our Thoughts and Affections from any Creature*; *much* Recollection, *and withdrawing from abroad into our selves*; *much* Meditation *on such selected Subjects, as may rather inflame our Affections than increase our Science*; *and when once we find these enkindled, the Endeavouring a* Quiescence, *as much as we can from former* Discourse, (*those actions of the Brain and Intellect now hindering the Heart and Will*) *and the bringing of our selves rather to a simple Contemplation, to exercise Acts of Love, adhere to, sigh after, and entertain the Divine Object thereof. And here* (saith he) *if his Divine Majesty please to advance us any higher to such* Unions *with Him, as are not in our power, and wherein we receive rather than act, and he operates in us rather than we our selves, we embrace them with all Humility and Gratitude*; *if otherwise, we acquiesce in our best endeavours, and longing after him with Patience, though enabled also to these only by his Grace. This our* Spiritual and Mystical Masters *teach us*; *and thus, after this way, which these Men stile* Fanaticism *and* Enthusiasm, *we endeavour to procure a more strict*

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Acquaintance and Converse with God, and herein to follow the Example of our Fore-Fathers.

"Elsewhere, saith our Author, he (Fa. *Baker*) "describes the Progress towards this State of Per- "fection thus; *That he who would come to it must* "*practise the drawing of his External Senses inwardly* "*to his internal, there losing, and, as it were, annihi-* "*lating them: then he must draw his Internal* "*Senses into the Superior powers of the Soul,* "*and there annihilate them likewise: And those* "*Powers of the Intellectual Soul he must draw into* "*that which is called the Unity; and to that Unity,* "*which alone is capable of perfect Union with God,* "*must be applyed and firmly fixed on God, wherein* "*the perfect Divine Contemplation lyes.* It is true, these words are in Father *Baker*; but they are but what he saith we read in other Authors: and besides he adds: "*Now, whether such Ex-* "*pressions as these will abide the strict Exami-* "*nation of Philosophy or no, I will not take on me* "*to determine. Certain it is, that by a frequent* "*and constant Exercise of Internal Prayer of the* "*Will, joyned with Mortification, the Soul comes* "*to operate more and more abstracted from Sense,* "*and more celebrated above the Corporeal Organs* "*and Faculties; so drawing near to the resem-* "*blance of the Operations of an Angel or Separated* "*Spirit.*

By this we may perceive, that it is *not difficult*, as our Author saith, *to put together some*

of their Words and Phraſes, as an Account of their Divinity; (p. 285.) and what Account that is. But beſides theſe, there are ſome other paſſages which he recites; and in them ſome, which he conſtrues, as he doth theſe and other things; and ſome Expreſſions, which may ſeem hard Sayings to one, who is not willing to underſtand them, or conſider them as terms of Art, and allow them a candid Conſtruction; and may afford Matter for Exerciſe of Wit to ſuch as are diſpoſed to ſport themſelves with Matters of Religion. The wicked Spirit does eaſily inſinuate himſelf into, and impoſe upon *Perſons ingaged in Controverſy*; they are ordinarily like Souldiers ingaged in War, act as if all was Lawful, whereby they can incommode an Adverſary, without due regard to Charity, Truth, and that fair Dealing and Kindneſs which Chriſtianity enjoyns to Enemies; and too often behave themſelves like ſuch Souldiers, as are loath to have an End of a War leſt they ſhould want Employment, trifling and skirmiſhing at a diſtance, with vain Words and Shews: and the conſequence in each is frequently the baffling and diſparaging of the Cauſe they are ingaged in, and giving advantages to their Adverſaries. And I wiſh this Author, by his management, hath not given too much Advantage, or at leaſt Occaſion, to the common Adverſaries, Infidels and Deiſts. But as to this cauſe, *O. N.* hath ſo fully

fully answered all Cavils at the Terms of Art, that it seems he left little to be replyed to: and therefore, for Answer, our Author is reduced to these two shifts: 1. To inculcate the Unintelligibleness of Mystick Theology, from the cessation of the discursive Faculty at the time of Contemplation, (which is all that the Mystick Writers intend) as if all Men, in the very act of intent listening to Sounds, or beholding something extraordinary, did not the like in a great measure. 2. To make a great Bravado, as if he had the Authority of the whole Church of Christ against all Visions, immediate Revelations, Extasies, &c. in the case of *Montanus*; Whereas what was condemned in *Montanus* and his Companions, was not the pretending to Visions and Revelations; but pretending such to be Divine, which were not; but Diabolical, as appeared both by the Manner, and by the Matter, being Heresie: as is very plain in the ancient Writer in *Eusebius*, *l.* 5. *c.* 16. *When the Faithful throughout* Asia *had met often, and in many places of* Asia, *upon this account, and had inquired into this New Doctrine, and determined it to be prophane, and rejected this Heresie, they were expelled out of the Church.* And before he relates how *Montanus* his Ambition gave the Enemy an Entrance into himself, and he was filled with the Devil, and of a sudden possest with a furious and frantick Temper of Mind, &c. So he

ſaith of *Theodotus*, that he was poſſeſt with a falſe Extaſie, which plainly implies true ones believed then, contrary to what our Author doth pretend. To ſay that it hath no Foundation in the Chriſtian Doctrine, and yet to paſs by ſo many Teſtimonies of Scripture produced for it, with no better anſwer than what amounts to a Conceſſion, deſerves no other reply than only to note it. To miſtake and miſ-repreſent Mens Words through Ignorance, is a Fault, but more eſpecially in Men pretending to Learning and Knowledge; yet hath that ſome excuſe, by reaſon of the Humane Infirmity incident to all. But to do it wilfully, deliberately, and ſeeking Occaſions, is not only different from, but contrary to the Spirit of Chriſtianity. But what is it then, if it be in deſpight of that which is really true, and the Operations of the Spirit of Grace? To ſay that the *Caſe of Montanus* was the very *Caſe of Myſtical Unions*; and that the Spirit of *Montanus* was rejected in the Chriſtian Church as a Fanatick Enthuſiaſtical Spirit; as if the Caſe of Myſtical Unions was the Caſe of that Spirit ſo rejected, with other expreſſions to like purpoſe, are fit to be conſidered afterward, if they were not well conſidered before-hand. There is a paſſage, which he recites out of the Spiritual Exercises of the Jeſuites, *p.* 31, 32. *edit.* 1574. *viz. It is the great Perfection of a Chriſtian to keep himſelf indifferent,*

indifferent, to do what God shall reveal to him; and not to determine himself to do what he hath already revealed and taught in the Gospel: which is very gross indeed, if the meaning be what he would have us to believe; and indeed so gross, that it is not to be believed to be their meaning, if it be to be found there, and fairly translated: but since it is capable of another construction, *viz.* not to confine ones self to what is revealed in general; but to be indifferent, as to things not determined, but left indifferent, to do as God shall direct: I know not what can be said of any weight against it: Such a Construction had been but according to their own Rule: *Christianum unumquemque pium debere promptiore animo Sententiam seu Propositionem obscuram alterius in bonam trahere partem, quam damnare,* &c. *Exercit. Spirit.* p. 65. edit. *Aut.* 1676. 8°. which had been more worthy of our Author's Observation. Nor do I see any reason to alledge, as an Instance or Proof of their Fanaticism, that Custom of *Ignatius* and his Companions, related by *Orlandinus, lib.* 1. *n.* 111. *viz. In any matter of Debate they were to joyn together in Prayer; and after seeking God, what Opinion the most were of, that they resolve upon.* Where was the Fault in this? in joyning in Prayer? or in agreeing with the Majority? If the *Odium* of the Name will excuse any thing with the vulgar, yet it

becomes neither Chriſtianity, nor Ingenuity, nor is it conſiſtent with true Prudence, to condeſcend to ſuch mean Objections. *Over-doing* doth often ſpoil a good Work, and diſparage and diſcredit the Author. The *Errors and Miſcarriages of Devout People* ought to be pitied, mentioned with Grief, and not expoſed beyond Truth or Neceſſity: For that makes ſport for the Devils and wicked Men; gives Scandal to weak Men; promotes Uncharitableneſs and Irreligion; and diſcompoſeth and diſordereth the Spirit of him that doth it. He who judgeth others, ought to take care that they riſe not up in Judgment hereafter againſt himſelf. How will that Fanaticiſm, which carries Men to the fartheſt part of the World for the Converſion of Infidels to Chriſtianity, riſe up in Judgment againſt them, who ſuffer their own Pariſhes and Dioceſſes of profeſſed Chriſtians at home, to ſink into Infidelity, for want of due Care and ſufficient Inſtruction? And how will the Exceſs of Devotion (if it be ſo) in ſome Spiritual Writers, riſe up in Judgment againſt ſuch as will be found to have given occaſion to Tepidity, Careleſſneſs, and Neglect of the moſt Spiritual Exerciſes of Religion?

NOTES

NOTES and OBSERVATIONS to discern *Illusions*, from *Divine Inspirations*.

THERE is another part of the Quarrel, which our Author hath to this *Mystical Divinity*, besides that, that it is unintelligible, as he says, *viz.* That it leads Persons into strange *Illusions* of Fancy; which he takes to be a great Injury, not only to those Melancholy Souls that are led through this Valley of Shades and Darkness; but to the Christian Religion it self. Which, if true, is a just Cause of Quarrel indeed: But if well consider'd, no greater Cause than others have against the *Holy Scriptures*, because some wrest them to their own Destruction, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. It is true, many Persons have been impos'd upon by their own Fancies; and many more by Satan transformed into an Angel of Light: but must we therefore deny that there are any true *Divine Illuminations*, *Inspirations*, *Motions*, or *Communications?* It is therefore very necessary to be well considered, How they may be distinguished. And because *O. N.* in the Book which our Author answers, hath a Discourse on that Subject, which hath passed his Examination without any hard censure, which is an implicit Approbation, that may not improperly here be added.

FOR

FOR the diſcerning of ſuch *Illuſions*, proceeding from *Satan*, from the true *Inſpirations* of *God's Holy Spirit*, we affirm, That many *Notes and Obſervations* there be, whereby they may be known, if not certainly whether Divine, as to their Original; (where no Spirit of Prophecy or Miracles:) yet whether containing Truth, and advancing Vertue, as to the Matter; and whether any way noxious and hurtful, either to the Perſon that receives them, or others. And this is abundantly ſufficient. Now for theſe *Notes* of diſcerning them, I need referr the Reader to no other Book then to the Doctor's Martyr, *Sancta Sophia*, (though he was pleaſed to take no notice of them there) in the *Preface*, from §. 29. to §. 35. Again, in the *third Treatiſe*, p. 268. from §. 9. to §. 22. where, after directing a ſtrict Obſervation to be made concerning the Perſon, whether, 1. viciouſly inclin'd; 2. arrogant and proud; or, 3. curious; 4. or much addicted to melancholy, there are particularly caſt off, and marked out for *Satanical Illuſions*; among others, theſe: "*All ſuch* pretended "Inſpirations or Revelations as do invite the Perſon "to ſay or do any thing contrary to the Catholick "Faith, Obedience, Humility, Peace, and Unity, Ho-"neſty, Purity, and *any other Divine Vertue*: but eſpecially *contrary to the Catholick Faith, or Obedience*; for inſtance, as the *attempting to make any new and ſeditious Reformations*; as likewiſe, when the Perſons *obſtinately believe theſe Revelations to be of God, after they have been condemned by experienced Superiors and Directors.* All ſuch, I ſay, are condemned for *Satanical* Illuſions, which cuts all the nerves of all ſuch pretended Revelations as can any way diſturb the *Church's Faith, or Peace*; and moſt of all, of thoſe Enthuſiaſms and Fanatick

natick Frenzies which have been so common among *Protestants.* — §. 14.

Lastly, in all these Pretensions, where there is any greater difficulty of discerning the *Good* and *Divine* from the *Bad* and *Satanical* Spirit, we have a judge to repair to, the *Governours* of the *Church*; *The Spirits of the Prophets*, saith St. *Paul*, *are subject to the Prophets.* — §. 15.

But there are other Influences and Inspirations of the same Spirit, directing us also in *Actions in their own nature Indifferent, or of Counsel*, and on either side lawful, and free from Sin; some of which Inspirations cannot be tried, or distinguished from Enthusiasm, by any such way as the former; which, because they are much spoken of by the Mysticks, and are very necessary for advancing Christians in the way of Perfection, it seems requisite, for the freeing these also from Mistakes, to give the Reader here some account of them. §. 18.

1. We must know then (as *Sancta Sophia*, Tr. 1. p. 57. and others have discoursed more at large) that there are *two Spirits within us*; (that is, all the Regenerate) the *Holy Spirit*, and that of *Corrupt* Nature assisted with the Suggestions of the Devil, who took a kind of Possession of us upon *Adam*'s Fall, *Eph.* 2. 2. That this last Spirit is never totally expell'd or silenc'd in us during this Life; but tempts us still, *Gal.* 5. 17. And that its Suggestions may appear many times like the Motions of God's Spirit; pretending Good Ends, the performing some Duty to our selves or our Neighbour, our advancement in Vertue, and the like: That the Effect of the first of these Spirits, Sanctifying Grace, received in our Regeneration or Justification, is, in its infusion, ordinarily but as a small *Seed*, 1 John 3. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 23. Mat. 13. 31, 33. or

33. or ſpark, capable of a daily growth and increaſe; and which, with the co-operation of our Free will, and further Aids, that are from time to time received from God, works in us at length a total Reformation, and Chriſtian Perfection; which, ſo many among the Regenerate as do attain, are ſaid in a more ſpecial mannner to be *Spiritual* Perſons, and to have the *Spirit of God:* And in this ſenſe the Apoſtle writes to the *Corinthians*,-- *I, Brethren, could not ſpeak unto you as to Spiritual, but as to Carnal, and as to Babes in Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 3. 1. and ſo, ver. 3. *For ye are yet Carnal, and Walk according to Man:* that is, ye are Babes only in Chriſt, and ſo in ſome degree Carnal, and walking according to the natural Man ſtill, and not as yet entirely *Spiritual.* And frequent mention we find in the Scriptures of theſe ſeveral *Degrees* and *Growths* in a *Regenerate* Condition. (It being God's Pleaſure, that the New Man, as the Old, ſhould grow by degrees, and not be made compleat in us all at once.) Mention, I ſay, of ſome *Babes* and little ones, and to be fed as yet only with *Milk:* Of *ſtrong Meat*, and *Wiſdom*, and higher Myſteries, only to be delivered to, and *ſpoken amongſt, the Perfect.* See *Heb.* 5. 12, 13. 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1: 1, 2, 6. *Of growing in Grace*, and *receiving Increaſe from God*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. Col. 2. 19. Of *the new Man being renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. Of arriving *to a perfect Man unto the meaſure of the Stature* (or Age) *of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 13. Of the Apoſtles labouring *to preſent every one perfect in Chriſt Jeſus*, and *that they might ſtand perfect, and full in all the Will of God*, Col. 1. 28: 4. 12. and of this Perfection ſtill containing in it higher and higher degrees; *Not as if I had already attained*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3. 12.

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Though therefore by this Principle of a New Life, and the infusion of the habitual Grace of Charity, we are already translated from the former being of corrupt Nature to a Divine being of Supernatural Grace, freed, at the first, from the former state of Mortal Sin, and from the Slavery and Captivity we suffered under its Dominion; yet hath not this Spirit as yet attained such a soveraign Empire and Mastery over the importunate Solicitations of *Concupiscence*, and the *natural* Inclinations of our Will and Affections, as that we do not still fall frequently into many *lesser*, and those call'd *Venial* Sins; or at least, as to Actions that are not sinful, but in their nature indifferent, or lawful, that we do not, for the most part, still prosecute those that are more grateful, or advantageous to our present Carnal desires, and our Sensual or secular designs: Though such Actions are no way *expedient* for us, nor acceptable to the *Holy Spirit*, in which now we live; nor do conduce to our *growth* in Grace, but are great hinderances thereof; and though these Acts, contained indeed within the compass of lawful, yet often expose us to *Occasions of Sin*. Now, so long as we stay here, and advance no further, we appear but as Infants, and Babes in Grace, it having not as yet obtained its perfect Reign in us, either over our *Concupiscence*, which carries us still into frequent venial Sins; or over our *Nature* and *Will*, which carries us, in other matters lawful, to those satisfying our *natural* Condition. But, when we are come to have *potestatem voluntatis nostræ*, as St. *Paul* expresseth it, 1 *Cor.* 7. 37. come once to act seldom according to φρόνημα σαρκὸς, Concupiscence, to fall seldom into Venial Sin, especially with advertency and unsurprised; and the Holy Spirit to have a more absolute power over *Sense*, *Reason*, our own

Will,

Will, *Propriety*, and *Self-love*, as to these things lawful, but not expedient; when come to St. *Paul's omnia mihi licent, sed ego sub nullius redigar potestate*, 1 Cor. 6. 12. and to his *corpus in servitem redigo*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. and to act more constantly according to the Spirit, moving now more perceptibly in us, and giving the Law to us, when Grace is, as to these non-expedients, also predominant, and sole Mistress; ordering all things (without our reluctance, or also with our zeal,) to the greater Love, Praise, Honour of God, and the doing of all things in order to his *Will*, so far as it is made known to us by this his *Spirit*, then are we arrived to a *full* growth, to a *compleat Man in Christ*, to a state of *Perfection*, such as this Life attains: but few Regenerate there are that do not, by their own disorders, die in their Spiritual Youth, before they come to such a mature Age. As therefore, in our Regeneration, a Man is removed from the state of *Sin* into the state of *Grace*; so the Church desires in that which is called (from some high Mysteries it speaks of as to the supream Effects of this Grace) *Mystical Theology*, to advance those, already in the state of *Grace*, to that of *Perfection*; and from the Spirit Dwelling, to it more absolutely Reigning in us, which finds so many great Rewards, not only in the next, but this present Life. §. 19.

2. We must know therefore, That to such end this *Holy Spirit* received in our Regeneration assisteth and worketh in us, not only as to affording generally to all good Christians that seriously endeavour to save their Souls, such *internal Illuminations* and *Motions* as are sufficient to direct them for the *resisting* of any *sinful* Temptation, or to perform any *necessary act* of Vertue, in Circumstances wherein they are *obliged* to

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it; but also, in affording us Light and Ability in all *indifferent* Actions and Occurrences, (with which may be also joyned all the Acts of Christian Vertues, when no necessity obligeth us to do any of them, and so when it is lawful for us, without Sin, to do or omit them) whereby we are guided to make such a Choice, as is more conformable to God's Will, and, particular Circumstances considered, may much more advance us in the Love of God, and Christian Perfection, and whereby we may avoid such other of them as may be suggested, either by *corrupt Nature*, or the *evil Spirit*, under pretence also of some Good End, but to defeat a Better. For the *Holy Spirit* excites us and assists us, not only in doing Duties of necessary obligation, or in the avoiding what is prohibited, and performing what is commanded by God under penalty of Sin; but in all these Acts also, that may any way tend more to God's Glory, or to our greater Perfection; though these be such as we may without sinning chuse or refuse.

For in this I may say, that the *Holy Spirit* in us is like to *Concupiscence* in us; the one continually exciting us unto that which is *Better*, as the other to that which is *Worse*. See the Apostles description of these two inmates, *Rom.* 8. 1. *&c.* and *Gal.* 5. 16, 17, 18. where he saith, v. 7. that *Spiritus concupiscit adversus Carnem, & Caro adversus Spiritum*— and that *sibi invicem adversantur*. And *ibid.* v. 18. as also *Rom.* 8. 14. That those who are God's Children, or Regenerate, *aguntur Spiritu, are acted by the Spirit*: It *guides* us into *Truth*, Jo. 16. 13. *brings* things forgotten to our *Remembrance*, Jo. 14. 26. gives *Knowledge* and Arguments to one, *Act.* 6. 10. *Utterance* and Eloquence, and the power to *perswade*, to another, *ibid.* 2. 4. To another *Wisdom*, or a good Judgment,

1 *Cor.*

1 *Cor.* 1. 5: 12. 8, 9, 28. Prudence in *Governing*; in executing anothers Commands, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. To another Courage, and *Boldneſs*, Act. 4. 29, 31. It *opens* Mens *Underſtandings* and *Hearts*, and renders them docile, and apt to believe, *Luk.* 24. 8. *Act.* 16. 14. *Eph.* 1. 18. What is there that is not done in us by this *Holy Spirit*, when we are employed about any thing that tends to the Glorifying of *God*, *the Father*, or the *Son?* So is our regenerate Life wholly managed by this *Spirit*, as the Natural is by the *Soul*; and, if not obſtructed, works in us a continual *growth in Grace*, till we come to a perfect Man in Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. *Eph.* 4. 13. Therefore the Apoſtle exhorts his Converts, *Gal.* 5. 25. that as *they live* (their new Life) *in, or by, the Spirit, ſo they would walk in it*, (according to its directions:) And that they would *mind or affect the things of the Spirit*, (or the things it minds them of:) Becauſe, τὸ φρόνημα τῆ σαρκὸς, within them is *Death* in the end; but the φρόνημα τῦ πνέυμα]Θ, within them is *Life* and *Peace* to them: Exhorts them alſo, *Eph.* 4. 30. with no *corrupt* and fruitleſs *Communication to contriſtate or grieve this Spirit.*— Tim. 4. 14. *not to neglect it.*— 1 Cor. 15. 10. *That it ſhould not be void* (or idle) in them— 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 19. *not to quench it.* Eph. 5. 18. To *repleniſh* themſelves with *it*. And 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. continually to *revive* it— *Rom.* 12. 11. to be *fervent in it*; without which the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *we cannot think a good Thought*; and our Lord, *Jo.* 15 5. *that we can do nothing.* §. 20.

3. Theſe Actions of the latter kind, we are now ſpeaking of, that may be lawfully done, or omitted, the one or the other performed, without any guilt of Sin, are either ſuch, as, by the Evangelical Counſels, and the dictate of rectified Reaſon, are *clearly* diſcerned

diſcerned by us; the one to be *better*, and more to lead to Chriſtian Perfection than the other; or ſuch, where we have ſome *doubt* of theſe two Actions, good or lawful, which is the better, or more expedient. In the former of theſe we may ſafely conclude, that that which is *manifeſt* to us to be the better, as to our Perfection, is the motion in us of the *Holy Spirit*; and that the doing it, is the doing the *Will of God* in this matter; and that ſo often as we reject or neglect this, ſo often we *contriſtate* the *Spirit*, (that would thus conduct us to Perfection,) and refuſe to do *God's Will*, when this is known to us; whoſe Will it ought always to be preſumed to be, that we ſhould do that which is clear to us, all things conſidered, to be beſt, for his Glory, and our Good, to be done; though ſuch omiſſion or neglect amounts not to a Sin, but to a Failing ſo much in Perfection. And indeed the not vigilantly obſerving theſe *Motions of the Spirit* within us, and the not hearkening to and obeying them when evident to be ſuch, or alſo the not preconſulting by Prayer what it adviſeth, but rather precipitating our Action to prevent it, is the reaſon of ſo many their no greater Improvement in the Spirit, and that they are ſuch ſtrangers to it, and It to them, is a check to the further and ſtronger operations of it in the Soul; (for, Who would offer Counſel, ſeldom or never accepted, or asked?) abates the Fervour and Solace that there would be in proſecuting its Suggeſtions, and leaves us guilty of much Unkindneſs and Ingratitude. For, as St. *Bernard*, *Cum hæc Sancti Spiritus circa nos diſpenſatoria quidem viciſſitudines vigilantiſſime non obſervantur, fit, ut nec abſentem deſideres, nec preſentem glorifices*, in Cant. Serm. 17. *When theſe condeſcending viciſſitneſs concerning us are not moſt watchfully heeded, it comes to paſs*

that thou doſt neither deſire him when abſent, nor glorifie him when preſent.

But in the latter Actions, wherein we have ſome cauſe of doubt, which is beſt, and yet wherein the making a good choice may be exceedingly beneficial to us, (according to the variety of our Temper and Condition) to the better ordering of our Life and Service of God, ſuch Illumination and Direction of the *Holy Spirit*, or alſo a *clear diſcerning* thereof, is obtained eſpecially by much *Purity* of Converſation, and *Abſtraction* from Worldly things; by frequent *Recollection*, and Introverſion, and attendance on God, in the perfecteſt Practice of *Prayer* we can attain to. For God hath graciouſly declared to us in the Scriptures; *That the effectual Prayer of a Righteous man* (as that of *Elias*) *availeth much*, Jam. 5. 17. *That he heareth not Sinners*, but *if any one be a Worſhipper of him, and doth his Will, him he heareth*, Jo. 9. 31. That *all things whatſoever we ſhall ask in Prayer*, (that is, ſuch Perſons) *not doubting, but believing, we ſhall receive them*, Mat. 21. 22. Mar. 11. 23. That *if we abide in Chriſt, and he in us, ask what we will, and it ſhall be done unto us*, Jo. 15. 7. (becauſe indeed ſuch ask by the Spirit of Chriſt, who liveth in them, and ſo ask according to God's Will.) That *if we keep his Commandments, and do what is pleaſing in God's* ſight, *what-ever we ask we receive of him*, 1 Jo. 3. 22. That *if we ask any thing according to his Will he heareth us*, (and grants our requeſts,) 1 Jo. 5. 14. that *though we know not what we ſhould deſire, or pray for as we ought*, Rom. 8. 26, 27. (that is, as to temporal Proſperity, or Afflictions, or ſuch like things, of which St. *Paul* there ſpeaks, what therein is beſt for God's Glory, or our own Proficiency) yet the *Holy Spirit* within us with *unutterable Groans* and great Ardour *intercedeth for*

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us according to God's Will; and *that God knoweth its Mind*, (though not expressed in Words) and granteth its requests: that the same *Spirit searcheth the profound things of God*, (and what is his Will) and *revealeth* them to us; that natural Reason is not able to understand them, but they many times seem *Foolishness* to it: but the things of the Spirit are *discerned* only by the Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. *&c.* Most of which Texts seem to be spoken, not only of our petitioning God concerning the necessary means of our or others Salvation; but more universally of all sorts of Requests concerning the things of this Life, and any things that are in their nature indifferent, and lawful; and of his Spirit directing us to ask and do in them what is his Will; and of his granting those to us which may be best for us; wherein God heareth, and granteth the Petitions of his Saints much sooner than of others. §. 21.

I say then, since God in the Scriptures hath declared these things, and made these Promises, that he will not deny what we ask according to his Will, we may rationally presume and be piously confident, that he will grant our Request, when this is, only to *know* his *Will*, that we may do that which is according to it; and we may safely take that for his Will, to which, after such Addresses, and other due Preparations made, we shall find our selves more strongly inclined; and also take such Inclination to proceed from the Operation of God's Spirit, either illuminating sometimes our Understanding, in discovering to it some Reasons not so well discerned; or else disesteemed, and thought inconsiderable before; Or sometimes more confirming to us the Judgment our own Reason made of the thing before: Or sometimes effecting a strong and suddenly injected Inclination

in the Will, ſo ſwayed without any preceeding Reaſons, or diſcourſe of the Intellect preſented (to) it; Or ſometimes cauſing an extraordinary Tranquility, Conſolation, and Satisfaction to accompany ſuch our Election; (According to the Rule of Abbot *Iſaac* in *Caſſian*, Collat. 9. c. 32. *Cum orantes nos nulla interpellaverit hæſitatio, ſi obtinuiſſe nos in ipſa orationis effuſione, quod poſcimus, ſenſerimus, non ambigamus preces noſtras ad Deum efficaciter penetraſſe*; where note, that the Devil, or any Creature, cannot work ſo immediately and intimately on our Underſtanding and Will, as God's Spirit doth; but by the uſe of Phantaſms, or Images; of the Spirits, Humours, *&c.*) Or, where no ſuch preponderation to any ſide is perceived in the Soul, then we may preſume this to be his Will, that, making uſe of our beſt Reaſon, or others Advice, without any Solicitude, we take either ſide. §. 22.

Now, in the diſcerning of theſe *Divine Illuminations* and *Inſpirations*, from *Enthuſiaſms*; or the *Motions of the Good*, from thoſe of our *own*, or a *Bad Spirit*, in theſe matters; as any one hath attained to a greater Perfection in Prayer, and Mortification and Purity of Life, they attain hereby a greater meaſure of God's Spirit, and hence its Illuminations and Inſpirings in them are alſo much greater and ſtronger, and more intimately effective on the Soul, than any other Motions, from whenceſoever they come, can be; and ſo alſo theſe become more evident to ſuch, and many times are ſo clearly diſcerned by them, from the Supernatural impreſſion they make upon the Soul, as that it cannot reſiſt, disbelieve, or any way doubt of them, that they are Supernatural and Divine. So St. *Auſtin* relates of his Mother *Monica*, that ſhe clearly knew ſuch Supernatural actings in her

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from her own Imaginations; *Dicebat enim, diſcernere ſe neſcio quo ſapore, quem verbis explicare non poterat, quid intereſſet inter revelantem Te, & animam ſuam ſomniantem*, Confeſſ. l. 6. c. 13. *For ſhe ſaid, ſhe did diſcern, by I know not what Savour, which ſhe could not explain in words, what difference there is between Thee revealing, and her own Soul dreaming.* And indeed, if ſuch interior Divine Operations were not ſometimes certainly diſcernable, how could St. *Paul* be aſſured, when he intended to Preach the Word in *Aſia*, and again in *Bithynia*, (a moſt Charitable deſign!) that the *Spirit* forbad it; and not rather the Enemy of the publiſhing of the Goſpel? *Act.* 16. 6, 7. or, That it was *by Revelation*, and not a Fancy of his, that he aſcended to *Jeruſalem*, Gal. 2. 2. or, That it was the *Holy Spirit* that *teſtified*, and not Mens Fears, that much Affliction ſhould happen to him there? *Act.* 20. 23. How the *Corinthians* knew, when they had a Revelation, that it was not a work of their own Imagination? ſince all theſe things were tranſacted only interiourly in the Soul, and it was the *Holy Spirit* only, that in all theſe gave the Evidence to it ſelf. A certain Aſſurance then, it cannot be denyed, that ſome at ſometimes may have of Divine Operations in them. But yet it is not affirmed here, that all Perſons, leſs advanced in Prayer, and Purity of Life, or alſo the greateſt Saints at all times, diſcern the Operations of the Holy Spirit within them ſo clearly in this ſort of Actions, as not to be ſometimes miſtaken; and it is ſufficient, that Perſons piouſly diſpoſed, and frequent in Prayer, may have a rational preſumption of it, as hath been ſaid. Neither is any more communicated unto them, perhaps, for the better preſerving of their Humility. And that no abſolute Certitude is herein

to be expected, is a thing often confeſſed by *Sancta Sophia*. See 1 Vol. p. 139. and p. 137. §. 23.

4. But in caſe ſuch Divine Inſpirations be ſometimes miſtaken, yet can no damage come thereby, I mean as to committing any Sin; 1. The Subject of them we ſpeak of here being Matters in themſelves indifferent, and on any ſide lawful. See *Sancta Sophia* 1 Vol. p. 143. 2. No Command of Superiors in theſe any way neglected. 3. No Neglect, beſides uſing Prayer, in practiſing any other means of making a ſecure Choice, either in weighing Reaſons on all ſides, or taking Advice from others: Only the devout Soul, in uſing theſe endeavours, yet relies not on them, but on the Directions of *God's Holy Spirit*, working continually in the *Regenerate*, both by prevenient and ſubſequent Grace; makes no ſudden Reſolutions, nor ruſhes haſtily upon any Action; but diligently hearkens firſt to this internal Guide, what it may tell her is beſt; deſiring faithfully, all natural Paſſions and Self-love laid aſide, to correſpond with all its Motions; the careful Obſervers of which, with a pure Intention of Mind, may be juſtly preſumed ſeldom to want them, though they do not ſo certainly know them; and mean while ſuch Perſons, if not free always from Miſtakes, yet are ſecure in this ſort of Actions we ſpeak of, from entertaining any *ſinful Enthuſiaſm*; or ſuch, as any other Perſon (except by Divine Inſpiration) can either cenſure or diſcover. §. 24.

Here the Author proceeds to another Diſcourſe, which being no leſs neceſſary for this purpoſe, than pertinent to the Subject of Myſtick Divinity, *it may be both proper for this place, and alſo uſeful and grateful to many devout People, to add part of it. It is of*

Directions

Directions given by *Spiritual Writers* concerning *Prayer* and *Devotion.*

FIRST *for Preparation for* Prayer, *they are adviſed* (1.) to a ſerious Endeavour *at all times* to keep their Conſcience clear from *all* Sin, *even the leaſt*, as much as Humane Frailty permits; and to a Care of avoiding the *Occaſions* thereof; without which Endeavours our Devotions cannot be acceptable to God, as to the receiving from him any great plenty of his Grace: And (2.) at times of Prayer to Abſtraction from all Secular Buſineſs, Recollection of the Mind and Thoughts from all Creatures, and all Objects of the Exterior Senſes.

And *then to begin at firſt with* Forms for all Occaſions of *Vocal Prayer*, where Novices, *ſaith he*, begin, and which the moſt perfect alſo frequently return to. §. 25.

From theſe they are led on to *Mental Prayer*; in which the Ceſſation from External Action renders the Inward more attent and affective; more free from Diſtraction of the Senſes, and from the Wandring of the Thoughts. For this many uſeful Subjects of *Meditation* are recommended, chiefly touching our own Miſery, the Myſteries of our Salvation, and the Divine Perfections.; 1. Of

their Natural Condition, the Heinouſneſs of Sin, the Divine Juſtice, the bitter Paſſion of our Lord in Satisfaction for Sin, the Terrors of Death, Judgment, and Hell, to plant in them the Due Fear of God, and advance in them all ſorts of Mortification and Purification from all Habits of Sin. 2. Of the Life of our Lord, and the Lives of his Saints, for Imitation and Growth in Vertue. And, 3. of the Divine Perfections and Benefits, both received and promiſed; of the Graces and Operations of the Holy Ghoſt in us, and the Abilities for doing Good and pleaſing God reſtored to Man by it, if attentively obſerved and obeyed; to advance them in all Spiritual Grace and Chriſtian Perfection, and to enkindle in them an ardent *Love* of God; the Acquiſition of which Love, and not of *Knowledge*, being chiefly deſigned in them. §. 26.

When by the Practice of theſe Meditations they are well prepared, they are directed, by laying more aſide their former *Reaſonings* and Diſcourſings of the Brain, (with the frequent ſtroaks of which they have already kindled this Fire in the Heart) how to exerciſe theſe Affections now, in that Leſſon *of Loving God with all the Heart, and all the Soul, and all the Mind, and all the Strength*, Luke 10. 27. in a more ſimple and quiet Intuition and Contemplation, Advertency and Admiration of the Divine Beauty, and Perfections; and in more fervent and amorous Colloquies with God; in Praiſing, Thanking, Solacing her ſelf with him, whilſt ſhe caſts her eye upon his infinite Mercies *paſt* and *promiſed*; in many Reſolutions for the future to ſerve him better, and no more ſo to grieve and offend him; in offering all ſhe hath, ſhe can do, or ſuffer, to his Service; and in putting her ſelf in a poſture of Silence and Atten-

Attention, to hear what he may be pleaſed to ſpeak to and in her: ſpeak to her, not only in Guiding and Admoniſhing in all neceſſary Duty, but alſo in things indifferent, or alſo good, but not neceſſary, when ſeveral of them happen to fall under deliberation; in which ſhe alſo deſires to be inſtructed by him, that ſhe may ſtill chuſe and do, that which may better pleaſe him, and wherein his Holy Will may be more perfectly accompliſhed. §. 27.

Which *Acts* of *Love*, when once to a competent degree facilitated in us, as they fill the Soul with great *Conſolations*, ſo they exceedingly help to advance it in all Chriſtian Duties and *Vertues*. For *Love* will not be idle, and works in us now with much more Fidelity and Alacrity, as doing all things not out of Fear, but Affection; and not to obey, but pleaſe her *Beloved*, and gain from him alſo a reciprocal Love. And when a Soul is arrived ſo far, through the conſtant Exerciſe and Cuſtom of *Prayer*, and other *Mortifications* neceſſary to it, that theſe Acts of *Love*, and of the *Will*, (of which there are many ſeveral *Degrees* ſurpaſſing one another) are rendered eaſie and frequent, and upon every Occaſion ſpeedily reſumed, without any or much preceedent meditation; which *Acts* before were difficult and rare: And when the Soul, by reaſon of the greater Sweetneſs ſhe finds in this latter affective Meditation, as I may call it, returns not to the former inventive Meditation without ſome reluctance, this is the firſt Entrance into that which is ſtiled a *State of Perfection*, ſuch as Humane Induſtry attains; namely, wherein the Will aſſiſted with Grace excites it ſelf to theſe *Acts of Love* and *ſimple Contemplation*. Of which Practice thus St. *Bernard*, De Interiori Domo, c. 14. *Jam fortaſſe aſcendiſti,*

aſcendiſti, jam ad cor tuum rediiſti, & ibi ſtare didiciſti: nec hoc ſufficiat tibi; Diſce habitare, & manſionem facere; & qualicunque mentis vagatione abſtractus fueris, illuc ſemper redire feſtina. Abſque dubio per multum uſum quandoque tibi vertetur in oblectamentum in tantum ut abſque ullâ laboris difficultate poſſis ibi aſſiduus eſſe; quin imo pœna potius tibi ſit alibi quam ibi moram aliquam facere. "Thou haſt now perhaps aſcended; thou haſt "now returned to thy Heart; and haſt learned to "ſtand there: Nor let this ſuffice thee: Learn to "dwell, learn to make thy abode (there.) And "with whatever Wandering of Mind thou ſhalt be "withdrawn, make haſte always to return thither. "Without doubt by much uſe it will at one time or "other be turned to Delight to thee, inſomuch, that "without any laborious Difficulty thou may'ſt be "there continually; yea, rather it will be a Pain to "thee to make any ſtay any where elſe than "there. Thus He; yet is the Soul not directed here to remain idle, ſtupid, or unactive, but to return to its wonted *Meditations*; and if neither fitly diſpoſed for theſe, to *Vocal* and *ſet Forms* of *Prayer*; or alſo to *Reading*, when the Sweetneſs of ſuch Contemplation ceaſeth. §. 28.

Devout Souls advanced hitherto are directed and provoked to yet much higher flights, and by their continued Devotions to proſecute a further Fruition of that Object, which hath no bounds. To this purpoſe, for their Encouragement, is declared to them, from Perſons experienced therein, the many rich *Rewards of Prayer*; the Supernatural Elevations that God is pleaſed to advance ſome Souls to, who have been much practiſed in this *Holy Exerciſe*, and the more free and *familiar Manifeſtations* of himſelf that he makes to them in ſeveral manners mentioned before;

before; wherein the Soul doth not now *act* ſo much, as, in a great Quietneſs, Silence, and reſt of its former natural Operations, is more immediately moved and *acted* by a more ſpecial Preſence of God in it, who ſometimes with the Touches and Influences of an extraordinary Grace doth illuminate, inflame, and raviſh the Soul, and cauſeth in it an ineffable and tranſporting *Delight* in Contemplating what is ſhewed to it of the *Divine Beauty* and *Perfections*; perceiving in it ſelf a moſt ardent Love, and this Supernaturally infuſed; when alſo are communicated to it many times Cœleſtial Secrets, and Divine Myſteries, and future Events, by internal Words and Revelation. All which things are received by it with a great Tranquility, and Attention, and Ceſſation of the Natural uſe of its Faculties, Senſitive or Intellectual: Nor ſeems it in its own diſpoſal whilſt it hath theſe Touches, but both doth and muſt ſee, and think, only what his Divine Majeſty will have it; and this only ſo long as he pleaſeth. Nor can any of theſe things by any Art or Induſtry of the Soul be attained or procured when ſhe will, but all is Supernatural, and as well above the Operations of *common Grace* in us, as of *Reaſon*. In which Supernatural and Extraordinary Divine Impreſſions upon the Soul, the Experienced alſo obſerve two ſorts of Motions in it: Either a very intimate *Retreat* and *Recollection* of the Soul from Exterior Objects, as it were into ſome interior part of it ſelf, removed from the Thoughts or Remembrace of Creatures or Worldly things; which is often joyned with a Retiring alſo of the Vital Spirits, more or leſs, from the outward parts of the Body left ſometimes in ſuch Recollection without Senſe, Motion, or Heat. *Alienatio Mentis à Senſibus Corporis*, S. *Auguſtin* (in *Pſal.*

Pſal. 67.) calls it, *ut Spiritui quod demonſtrandum eſt demonſtretur.* Such perhaps was that Extaſie of St. *John*, when he is ſaid to have been in the Spirit, *Rev.* 1. 10. Or, 2. an *Elevation*, *Rapt*, or *Flight* of the Soul as it were above it ſelf, and as if it were to depart preſently out of the Body, and the Perſon to ſuffer a preſent Diſſolution. *Avolatio Mentis*, as S. *Bernard* expreſſeth it. Such ſeems that of St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. §. 29.

Theſe things are not handled as *Rules of Devotion*, but as a Reward of it; and as things only in God's, not our Power. Yet are theſe Rich Gifts of God and Preguſtations of the State in the World to come recommended to ſignifie the many noble Effects and powerful Influences, which ſuch Favours have upon thoſe who receive them, as to the compleating them in all Chriſtian Perfection; that is, in the perfect Love of God; all theſe Divine Inactions tending ſtill to a clearer Manifeſtation of God to the Soul, and ſo to the wounding it more deeply with the Love and Longing after him, and after the Suffering and Doing any thing with all Alacrity for him; and the Graces that are received diſpoſing us ſtill to others higher, if the Soul correſpond to them as ſhe ought. *If I perſevere* (ſaith S. *Bernard* (in *Cant.* Serm. 69.) ſpeaking of theſe Favours) *to correſpond to this Condeſcention, as much as I can, with meet Affections and Actions, and the Grace of God be not in vain in me, the Father and the Son will ever make their Abode with me.*

We are alſo told, That, though upon no Preparations and Prediſpoſitions in us, whatever ſuch Favours do neceſſarily follow, yet without theſe God doth not uſually grant them: That Active Contemplation is the ready way to Paſſive; and, That though

though in the higher degrees of them they are but rare, and given to few, yet in ſome inferior degree they are communicated to many: and however, That an Active Contemplation and Fruition of God by Love, (ſpoken of before) and the Great Advancement in all Chriſtian Vertue gain'd thereby, (if we be admitted to no higher things, of which true Humility always eſteems its ſelf unworthy) is a ſufficient Recompence in this World for any Pains of ours in Purging of our Life, and cloſe Attendance on God in *Solitude* and *Prayer*, which is undertaken for it.

Laſtly, ſince ſuch Chriſtian Perfection chiefly contains in, and depends upon the Exerciſe of the Affective part of the Soul, and not on high Knowledge or Speculation, therefore it is recommended as attainable by all Sexes and Conditions, and all are equally encouraged in the Proſecution of it. *For the Grace of Contemplation*, as S. *Gregory* obſerves, in *Ezek.* hom. 17. *is not given to the high, and not given to the low; but this do often the higheſt, and often the loweſt; more often thoſe who are remote, that is, from Worldly Cares, but ſometimes thoſe who are in a Married State receive.* §. 30, 31.

More of this he hath afterward, which I ſhall here add, as followeth:

Of the Steps, in order to the higheſt State of Perfection, which this Life arrives to, mentioned in *Sancta Sophia*, p. 32. 1. The firſt, is the way of *External and Imaginary Exerciſes of Prayer*; that is, uſing the Diſcourſe of the Underſtanding, and *Meditations*, as alſo *Vocal Prayer*; then which Step, *Sancta Sophia* obſerves, many go no further, but end their days in it; that is, in ſuch *Meditations* is taken up the moſt part of their Devotions.

2. The

2. The second Step is, *the Exercise of the Will and Affections*, which, after long practice, breaks forth into continual *Aspirations* and *Elevations* thereof.

3. The Third, is, *Divine Inaction*, or the extraordinary, and supernatural, and more sensible Operations of God's Spirit in the Soul, wherein God acteth more than she, and which are not in her power at all to procure sooner, or retain longer, then God pleaseth: of which much hath been said before.

4. After which usually, in the Intervals of these Cœlestial Visits, do follow great *Desolations* of Spirit, as the Experienced have described them; partly arising from the sense of her Loss, and an impatient longing after these Favours, once tasted; and partly out of a great nauseating, and distrelish that she hath now of those entertainments of the Creature, from which she formerly received some Content. Such we may imagin was that of the Prophet *David*, when he said; *Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est*, And *Concupiscit & deficit anima mea, in atria Domini*, And after a *Non movebor in æternum*, (Psal. 29.) an *Avertisti faciem tuam, & factus sum conturbatus*. §. 63.

But not only this; but God also sometimes withdraws even from his greatest Saints, and that for some long duration of time, any sensible assistance at all of his Grace, leaving the Soul as it were in its pure Naturals, and as if he were quite departed from it, in great Aridity, Obscurity, Solitude, Pressure and Heavines, disgusted with all things, she knows not why; performing still her Devotions, and accustomed Duties of Piety, and the Service of God, as formerly, but without any sensible comfort in such

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Performance; Meditation, Aſpiration, Reading, very difficult, ſterile, inſipid, and ſeeming without Fruit; only forbearing her Conſent to any Sin, Vanity, or Senſuality, and not ſeeking any ſecular Conſolations. Much diſcouraged alſo at ſuch times many are, in imagining, that God hath ſo deſerted them, for Failings in their Duty, or for ſomething wherein they have offended his Divine Majeſty, which doubles this Anguiſh. Or, if not this, at leaſt they imagin it to be cauſed by ſome great Indiſpoſition of Body, (as it is granted ſometimes partly it may) ſo as ſome begin therefore to diſpenſe for a time with the former Exerciſes of their Devotion, and other pious Employments. But notwithſtanding many times in theſe, the poor Soul is miſtaken; and this ſtrange dejection of Spirit comes, without any ſuch reſpects, meerly from the ſole Will of God, and is the ordinary courſe of his proceeding with thoſe alſo, who are by his former Graces well grounded, and arrived to ſome degree of Perfection, and is ſent only for their much greater Advancement therein, and the rendring them more capable of higher Favours; and therefore ought, as ſuch, to be entertained with all Equanimity, Patience, Reſignation, and Conformity to his Will.

Theſe *Conſolations* and *Deſolations* take, as it were, their certain turns in them, as they do, in a leſſer degree, in all the Regenerate; they have by courſe a Day, and a Night; an Aſcent towards God, and a Deſcent, and decadence into themſelves; a Vivification by and in him, and a Mortification in themſelves; a Summer, wherein the Branches ſhoot forth, and Fruit comes to Maturity; and a Winter, when the Root ſpreads more, and the Tree becomes more ſurely fixed. To all God's Children do theſe Viciſſitudes

ciſſitudes happen; but theſe in a higher degree to the further advanced in Perfection; and the greateſt Favours are preceeded with greater Deſolations; and theſe ordinarily proportioned one to the other. And always neceſſary, leſs or more, are ſuch Purgations and Refinings of the Soul by theſe interior Croſſes, becauſe always ſomething in them is amiſs, and as yet imperfect. Our natural Corruption is ſtill producing ſomething in us to be amended; and ſome Self-will and Self-love to be parted away by this ſharp Remedy, whilſt we are in this Life. And the *Benefit* of theſe *Deſolations*, if rightly complied with, as well as of Divine *Conſolations*, is very great in many reſpects. §. 64.

For herein it is, that the Soul comes moſt perfectly to know it ſelf, and all other Creatures; to ſee its own Nothingneſs, and to be moſt perfectly purged and cleanſed from all Self-love and Propriety: and herein it is moſt eſpecially taught - *non quieſcere in donis Dei, ſed in Deo*; - and *Adorare Deum in Spiritu & Veritate*; not, *in Devotione*: and *Exercere ſe ad Deum in adverſis, ſicut in proſperis*; the ſeeking Guſt, and Suavity, and Conſolations, even in Spiritual things, being one of its Imperfections, ſince theſe are not God himſelf. Herein it is, that the Soul is preſerved amidſt ſuch Divine Favours, which are apt to inflate it, in a due and neceſſary Humility; (*Angelus Satanæ colaphiſans, ne magnitudo Revelationum extollat me*, ſaith the Apoſtle after his Rapt.) Herein its true Love and Adherence to God; (*Qui veniendo adjuvat*; and then, *derelinquendo probat: Donis firmat*; and then, *Tribulationibus tentat*; ſaith St. *Gregory*, Moral. l. 20. c. 19.) its Perſeverance and Loyalty are eſpecially diſcerned, in keeping conſtant in the Service of him, when deprived of all

all Consolation in it; avoiding any application to the Comforts of the Creature, when God hath thus as it were dismissed, and cast it off: But resigning it self, and loving its Misery for his Sake, and because it is his Will that it should be so. An Exercise wherein our Lord himself was pleased to be tried, (that he might become a merciful High Priest before God, and experimentally) that he might compassionate our Infirmities in the great Desolation he underwent in the Garden, the Night before his Passion, *Heb.* 4. 15: 2. 17. Where, *cepit pavere & tædere*, saith the Evangelist, *Matt.* 26. 37, 38. And that sad Expression came from him, *Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem: Tarry here, and watch with me*, Mark 14. 34. Yet these Desolations also, in a Soul thus far advanced in Grace, are not void of a mixture of Joy and Satisfaction, that it hath always in God's Will being performed in them; which *Will of God* now, in whatever happens, is a constant Consolation to it; and the Apostles Precept, 1 *Thess.* 5. 16, 17. of *Semper gaudete*, is thus accomplished in such a Soul, as well as his *orate sine intermissione*; and go together. For there cannot want Content, where the Mind hath its Desire; nor doth such a Mind want this that is unanimous with the Divine Will: the want of which Conformity, is only from the loving of something that is against his Will. Worldly Sorrows, saith St. *Gregory*, *affligentes cruciant*; but these Spiritual, *reficiunt dum affligunt*. In the one is, *In afflictione maror*; but in the other, *In merore lætitia*, Moral. l. 23. c. 13. Nay, more true Sweetness in these Sorrows, than in the other Joys: And the abstaining in such a sharp Tryal from all Sin against God, or seeking Comfort from any thing besides Him, or giving over her accustomed

Exerciſes of Piety, argues alſo then a cloſe *Union* of the Soul with God, though not ſo ſenſible; and that when it thinks it ſelf fartheſt from him, it is in ſome ſort neareſt to him. Laſtly, by and upon theſe Spiritual Deſolations ordinarily it is, that the Soul afterward receives higher ſenſible Viſits, and Careſſes from God, then any former were; for which the Soul ſeems beſt prepared by this her extream Poverty and Lowneſs; and then it is, if ever, the Soul receives them with more Gratitude; and both highlier values them, and villifies its ſelf. And it is God's ordinary way to exalt us in proportion to our Humility, and to be *Adjutor in tribulationibus*, as *in opportunitatibus*, when alſo the Soul is more endeared unto him by her Sufferings. All this I have ſaid, to ſhew that theſe Spiritual Deſolations (of which this Author Ironically ſaith, Then, when one would leaſt expect them, follow, *&c.*) are a neceſſary part of the *Way to Perfection*; and that the reſiſtance of ſuch Preſſures when they come, or a non-compliance with them in ſhewing much Irreſignation and Impatience, in ſeeking to relieve ſuch Spiritual Deſertions with ſome ſecular Contents, in relaxing former Holy Practices, and the like, diſappoints the Soul of thoſe following Conſolations, which are the proper Reward of theſe Sufferings, and diſturbs God's Work in her, and good Intentions toward her; and hinders her Growth in Vertue, by her retaining ſtill thoſe *Imperfections*, and that *Self-love*, which theſe, rightly received, would have purged and mortified. This of the fourth Step to Perfection, *Deſolation*.

5. The Fifth, is a State more ſettled, conſtant, and tranquil, where neither theſe Deſolations are ſo frequent or neceſſary; nor thoſe Cœleſtial Viſits ſo violent, or ſo ſhort. §. 65.

To

To these I shall add two or three of his Answers, to Objections and Cavils, such as I think most pertinent for Common use: and first, whereas upon the first Step his Adversary descants thus: "*A sad Case to end our* "*days as Christ and his Apostles did, who used this low* "*dispensation of Praying to the last. But, alas! they* "*never understood these Unions with God in the Fund* "*of the Spirit; they taught Men a plain and intelligible* "*way of Serving God, and bid them look for Perfection* "*in another World.* To this he replies;

I ask, Did our Lord and his Apostles end their days only, or chiefly, in the first Step here, that of *Meditation*, and *Discursive* or *Vocal Prayer*, and never ascend to the second Step, exercising more therein the Will and Affections in Aspirations, and Elevations of the Soul to God? What think we of the most exalted Disciple St. *John*, every where discoursing so much of *Love?* and of our dwelling, by Love, in God, and God in us? 1 *John* 4. 16. What of those Precepts, *Pray without ceasing*, 1 Thess. 5. 17. *Watch and pray always*, Luk. 21. 36. *And with all Perseverance therein?* Eph. 6. 18. Are these to be understood only of *Vocal* and *discursive Prayer*, the first Step; or not rather of *Effective Prayer*, the second; (according to that, *Qui semper desiderat semper orat*;) which latter is also much easier to be continued? Again; What think we of our Lord's spending so long time in Prayer, often mentioned in the Gospels? *Rising up a great while before day*, for this purpose, *Mar.* 1. 35. Again; *retiring into the Wilderness*, for a great vacancy to it, *Luk.* 5. 16. Before the day of the Election of his twelve Apostles, (the twelve Foundations of his Church) ascending into a solitary Mountain, and there spending the whole Night in Prayer, *Luk.* 6. 13. His

aſcending again into another Mountain, before he took his laſt Journey to *Jeruſalem*, for the accompliſhing of his Paſſion, taking three of his Diſciples with him, where all the Night again was ſpent in Prayer; for it is ſaid, he deſcended not from the Hill till the next day: and that there the three Diſciples were ſurpriſed with Sleep, *Luk.* 9. 37, 32. In which Prayer they ſaw his Countenance changed, and an anticipated appearance of his Glory, ſuch as he ſhall have when he comes to Judgment, 2 *Pet.* 1. 16. and an Apparition alſo of *Moſes* and *Elias*, they by a ſupernatural Illumination knowing alſo who the Perſons were, *Matt.* 16. 28. and his Diſciple *Peter* in ſuch an Extatick Joy, as that he cryed out, *Bonum eſt eſſe hic*, &c. *Luk.* 9. 33. not knowing, ſaith the Evangeliſt, what he ſaid. So, in our Lord's being in Prayer, preſently after *John*'s Baptizing him happened the Viſion of the Heavens opened, the Holy Ghoſt deſcending upon him in a Bodily ſhape like a Dove, ſeen by the Baptiſt, *Luk.* 3. 21, 22. and a Voice from Heaven ſpeaking to him, as here, *Thou art my beloved Son*, Luk. 9. 35. And then a Rapt of the ſame Spirit that carried him into the Deſart; where alſo we may rationally imagin his time to have been wholly ſpent in Prayer and Devotion, and this in ſuch a degree, as to ſuſpend and ſupercede the ordinary Functions of Nature, as to Eating and Drinking; and in theſe his Prayers the Tempter to have aſſaulted him. What think we again of our Lord's *Infremuit Spiritu*, once and again, in his Prayer to his Father for the Reſurrection of *Lazarus*? Joh. 11. 33, 38. of the raviſhing Expreſſions of his Love, and tender Affection, and Aſpirations after a perfect Union of all his with Him, and his Father, in his Prayer after his laſt Supper,

per, delivered, *Joh.* 17. from ver. 20. to the end. And, laſtly, of his ἐκτενέστερον προσευχὴν in the Garden, with few Words, but much Paſſion, being in an Agony, and ſweating Blood, and making frequent acts of Reſignation, and Conformity to the Will of his Father. What think we again of St. *Peter*'s Extatical Prayer, and his Viſion on *Simon* the Tanner's Houſe-top, *Act.* 10. 9. and again, St. *Paul*'s in the Temple, *Act.* 22. 17. *Whilſt I prayed, I was in an Extaſie*, &c? Did our Lord and his Apoſtles, in the Devotions here mentioned, not aſcend at all to that which the *Myſticks* make the ſecond Step to Perfection, the Aſpirations and Elevations of the Will and Affections; but only ſtay on the firſt Step? and, *Did they underſtand nothing of that the Myſticks call paſſive Unions* with God? Their Extaſies and Raptures, and their being in the Spirit, their ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, 2 *Cor.* 12. 4. and στεναγμοὶ ἀλαλήτοι, *Rom.* 8. 26. argue otherwiſe. But then *are Paſſive Unions the obſcure and unintelligible way of Serving God*, that the Church teacheth in her Rules of Devotion; or, the end rather which her plain and intelligible way ſometimes attains to? Laſtly, Is there not in ſome ſort a State of *Perfection* alſo in this World? 1 *Cor.* 2. 6. *we ſpeak Wiſdom among the Perfect.* And *Phil.* 3. 15. *let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.* And *Luk.* 6. 40. *Every one that is perfect, ſhall be as his Maſter*, (that is, in Sufferings like him.) The Author may do well to review this paſſage of his, §. 66.

The repairing to *Prayer*, in the beſt manner we can make it, is a *proper, natural, and moſt efficacious way to obtain a ſupernatural Light* (from God's Spirit) *to diſcern his Will* in all our Actions; ſpeaking of ſuch as are indifferent, and ſuch wherein neither we, nor any others, have any external certain Rule,

all

all Circumſtances conſidered, whereby we may be guided, as we have in all ſuch other Actions, the Lawfulneſs of which is doubted of; which yet is not ſaid, as if *Prayer* were the only means of our direction in theſe, ſo as to exclude the making uſe of either our own Reaſon, or other Mens Advice, as is ſaid before. §. 76.

This is not making *Enthuſiaſm*, but *Prayer*, a means to obtain the Illuminations of God's Spirit, to ſhew us, in two things ſuggeſted to us, which of them comes from It, or which is more conformable to God's Will, that ſo we may follow and obey it: and, What a *Chriſtian* is he, that being doubtful, eſpecially in two affairs of much concernment, which to make choice of, doth not retire to his *Prayers*, deſiring God to direct him in ſuch a particular, and promiſing to do that which he ſhall be pleaſed, by any way, to ſignifie to him to be more conformable to his Will, and more conducing to Chriſtian Perfection, (as certainly the one may be much more than the other, although both contained within the general bounds of Good, or indifferent?) And then, what *Illumination* he Prays for, why may not he alſo expect? Again, Who is there, much frequenting *Prayer*, that doth not perceive in them ſome Illuſtrations and Influences entring, and injected as it were into his Mind, without his own procurement, touching a more perfect knowledge of himſelf; or the immenſe Love of God to Mankind; or ſome acceptable Service he may do to God or his Neighbour; or ſecret Reprehenſions for ſome Faults; or Admonitions for the better ordering of his Life; *Spiritu* (as our Lord ſaith, *Jo.* 3. 8.) *Spirante ubi vult*, and he not knowing whence ſuch things come, or how they paſs away? yet theſe things,

things, we are assured, must be from God's Spirit, because no *good Thought* is from our selves. And why may not we imagin the same (a due Preparation being supposed) of the Thoughts injected in our Doubtings, and Requests concerning Actions left free, and undetermined by the Divine declared Will, what way in these we may rather take, the better to serve and please him? God forbid that the Name of *Enthusiasm* should deterr Christians from such a Practice, or hearkening to this internal Language; or (as Mr. *Cressy* expresses it in his *Preface*) *should render Prayer, and by Prayer the obtaining of Divine Grace, a suspicious Exercise.* And I wish the Author would a little better weigh his Words, and the malign Influence they may have on others. We say then, *Divine Inspirations* are necessary (for Grace, as well *furthers* as *prevents* us) to distinguish the Motions of the *Good* and *Bad Spirit* in our Minds in matters purely indifferent, (which may be proposed to us by either of these Spirits, for a different end,) where we have no other external *Rule* to judge these *Motions* by, as we have in all internal Suggestions concerning such other matters as are either directly commanded or prohibited by God's Law.

I shall conclude my Collections out of this Author, with the Explications of some of the Terms of Art *which are quarrelled with, as followeth:*

Divine Inaction is, in plain *English*, the acting of God, or his Spirit in us, which, in the Perfect, is more extraordinary, sensible, and manifest. §. 48.

Passive Unions, are called *Passive*, not that when herein a Soul contemplates God, she may not be said in some sort Active; but, *Because when God is pleased so graciously to communicate himself to the Soul, the Soul*

is

is taken out of her own Diſpoſal, and doth and muſt ſee and think only what God will have her, and this no longer then his good pleaſure is ſuch. Neither can any Diſpoſitions or Preparations that the Soul can uſe aſſuredly procure it. Thus *Sancta Sophia* explains this Word: And the Expreſſion is ſecured by ſuch like Scripture Language; *Qui Spiritu Dei aguntur*,- Rom. 8. 14. *Not I live, but Chriſt in me*, Gal. 2. 20. *Not I work, but the Grace of God which is with me*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *Not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you*, Matt. 10. 20. *So the Spirit*, that is in us, *is ſaid to interceed for us with Groans unutterable*, Rom. 8. 26. *&c.* §. 48.

Deiformity and *Deification* are words not of late only, but anciently uſed, ſignifying an *Union* with God, not in *Eſſence*, but by *Grace*; and this Union ſtill more intimate, as the Grace more extraordinary: ſecured by like Scripture Language. For *Deiform*, *Renewed to the Image of our Creator*, Col. 3. 10. *Changed into the Image of our Lord*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *Transformed by the renewing of our Mind*, Rom. 12. 2. For *Deification*, *Partakers of the Divine Nature and of the Powers of the future World*, Heb. 6. 4, 5. The *Lord* and *we made one Spirit*, 2. Pet. 1. 4. *Filled with all the Fulneſs of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 17.

I have no more, but to acquaint the Reader, who this O. N. *was, out of whoſe Book I have collected thoſe things; his Name was* ABRAHAM WOODHEAD, *a good Man, who with great Modeſty and Solidity hath vindicated* Myſtical Divinity *againſt the Quarrel of one who charged it to be* Fanaticiſm. *His Character may be ſeen more at large in Mr.* Wood's Oxford Antiquities.

FINIS.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEREAS it is feared by ſome, that what is in the fore-going Diſcourſe related concerning *Plotinus* and *Porphyrius*, who lived in *Goſpel-times*, and yet were not Chriſtians, but the latter a grand Adverſary of the Chriſtians, and of Chriſtianity, may too much gratifie ſome call'd *Quakers*, to their hurt, who are great Magnifyers of the *Gentile Diſpenſation*: I do declare, that I ſhould be glad to gratifie any People for their Good, but not any to their Hurt: And therefore, to prevent any ſuch miſuſe of what I have written for a good purpoſe, which I have mentioned in the end of the *Preface*, they muſt know,

1. That as the Actions of *Witches*, and their Familiars, if the matter of fact be evident and undeniable, are good Evidence againſt *Atheiſts* and *Sadduceans*: and the Real Inſpiration of any Spirit, if proved, is good Evidence againſt all ſuch *Anti-enthuſiaſts*, as deny the Reality of *Inſpiration*, and that there is any thing more in it than meerly the actings of Peoples Imagina-

tions; so the plain apert Declarations by these Men of the *Mystick Divinity*, which was more occultly delivered by the Ancients, is good Evidence of the *Tradition* and *Succession* of these Mysteries, though they should be found to have erred in the Use and Application of it: And for this purpose was that Collection made.

2. That though *Porphyry* and *Plotinus*, and some others of them, might receive some Lights, Powerful Attractions, and Sensible Consolations, *&c.* from some considerable Spirit, yet was not that the Spirit of Christ, or any Good Ministering Spirit; not such as that of *Socrates*, under the Gentile Dispensation; for *Porphyry* ridiculed it; (*v. Soc. Hist. l.* 3. *c.* 23.) but a Spirit of Antichrist, and of Satan transformed, as appears most manifestly in *Porphyry*, who was a Renagado, and Apostate from Christianity; and that not upon any Grounds of Reason, but upon Passion for some Reproof, as *Valesius* understands it; or some more severe Discipline, he received from some Christians; possibly for some abuse by *Scoffing*, to which he was much addicted; and thereupon became not only an Apostate, but a spiteful Adversary, and the more impudent, through the Countenance of the Emperor *Julian*, who was also an Apostate, and such another Scoffer. This might be abundantly shewed, if it was needful here, and may be upon some other occasion: but this is sufficient for this.

And

And this may ſerve for another purpoſe, in reſpect of the *Quakers*; *viz.* to undeceive them, and let them ſee plainly by what Spirit they have been deceived, even this very Antichriſtian *Porphyrian* Spirit, and no better. *The Spirit*, I doubt not, is the very ſame, or of the ſame kind, only *the Appearance* is ſomewhat different, more bare-faced then, upon the Encouragement of an Apoſtate Emperor; but more covert now in this, being a Chriſtian State. But as that ſoon ceaſed, ſo will this, I am well ſatisfied, to the Shame and Confuſion of thoſe, who obſtinately perſiſt in their Errors; but eſpecially thoſe, who not only are deceived, but preſume to take upon them to be *Miniſters* of Chriſt, and deceive others; when it ſhall appear that they are only Miniſters of this *Porphyrian* Antichriſtian Spirit, that is, of Satan transformed; as I nothing doubt but it will in due time, and that ere long, by undeniable Moral Evidence, if not alſo by manifeſt Divine Vengeance upon ſome of the Obſtinate; which I have ſincerely endeavoured to prevent; and ſhould ſtill be glad to help them out, if they would humble themſelves, and give Glory to God, as their Caſe doth require: otherwiſe they will certainly be called to account for neglected Divine Favours.

As for *the Gentile Diſpenſation*, there is plainly a Fallacy concerning it put upon them by the

Subtilty and Fraud of that Spirit, which acts ſo ſenſibly amongſt them. For as the *Iſraelites* were choſen to be, as it were, of God's own Regiment, and are therefore call'd his Peculiar people; yet were they, for their Sin, delivered over to the Conduct of an Angel, *Exod.* 33. ſo were other Nations committed to the Conduct of certain Angels, probably of inferior Orders. And as the *Iſraelites*, after they were ſettled in the Promiſed Land, under the immediate Government of God, (*v. Sam.* 8. 7.) were often, notwithſtanding, for their Backſlidings and Tranſgreſſions, delivered into the hands of their Enemies, (which was plainly a Repreſentation of Spiritual matters:) ſo the other Nations, though they were committed at firſt to the Regiment of Good Angels, though of an inferior order, yet when they came to yield to the Inſpirations of Apoſtate Spirits, (which was a real, though Spiritual Fornication and Defilement) were left in their Power to be abuſed, and ridden, and led Captive by them at their pleaſure. And thoſe who continued under their Conduct to the laſt, without Repentance, are like to have their part with them hereafter. And this is *the Myſtery of Iniquity whereby theſe People are impoſed upon* by the Subtilty of this *Porphyrian* Spirit. For,

There is a *twofold Gentile Diſpenſation*, or *two parts of the Gentile Diſpenſation*; the one of *Grace*, under

under the Good Angel, which is God's Deputy; the other of *Judgment*, under the Apoſtate Spirit, which is God's Executioner of Vengeance. And this is it, which St. *Paul* tells us concerning the Seduced by the Spirit of Antichriſt, that God ſhould ſend them ſtrong Deluſions to believe a Lye, becauſe they received not the Love of the Truth; that they all might be damned who believe not the Truth. Now, whatever become of the reſt, who have not the Favour of the Goſpel communicated to them, but yet deſert not the Conduct of the Spirit, by God ſet over them; yet thoſe who have the Goſpel in all Simplicity offered to them, and either through Pride and Conceitedneſs, or through the Inſpiration of any Spirit, are drawn from it, their Caſe is very dangerous: for no Good Spirit would dare, or would offer any ſuch thing: and then it muſt needs be ſome wicked Spirit in diſguiſe, how ſpecious ſoever his appearance be, which for ſome Spiritual Sin, at leaſt, if not Carnal or Worldly, in them or their Parents, hath gotten Advantage of them: And ſuch are very officious to offer themſelves, and very ſubtile to deceive: And their Neglect of the Offers of Grace is like to prove fatal to them. But none are in greater danger than they, who are ſo unhappy as to become the Agents and Miniſters of ſuch a Spirit, whatever they may think of themſelves at preſent.

This,

This, I hope, may ſerve for this Occaſion; but having for divers Months paſt been endeavouring, by private Conferences with, and Letters to, the Chief of their Miniſters, to ſet this People right, in what they are out of the way, I intend ere long, if no leſs will ſerve, by the Grace of God, to diſcourſe theſe matters more fully at ſome publick Meetings, upon ſufficient Notice, and there to give a true *Account of my Proceedings with them* hitherto, and to diſcourſe *the Great Queſtion* now depending between us:

What that Spirit is, by which the Party hath been generally and principally acted and conducted? Whether the Spirit of Chriſt, or any Good Miniſtring Spirit; or the Spirit of Antichriſt, or ſome Porphyrian or Apoſtate Spirit?

And in the mean time I only recommend this Advertiſement to all, That the Holy Scriptures and the beſt Spiritual Writers give great Caution to beware of *falſe Spirits*, and Directions to *Try the Spirits*: and if the *Leaders* of the *Quakers* do not ſo, they are the more to be ſuſpected: alſo, That it is commonly agreed by ſuch Writers, that there is often much Deceit and Deluſions of *Evil* and *Seducing Spirits*, in ſeeming Illuminations, and Senſible Impreſſions and Inſpirations. See *Sancta Sophia*, *Tr.* 3. §. 4. ch. 5. *&c.*

FINIS.

Enthusiasmus Divinus:

THE

GUIDANCE

OF THE

Spirit of GOD:

The Doctrine of the Scriptures, of the Catholick Church, of the Church of *England* in particular, upon a Discourse of Sir *Matthew Hale*'s concerning it.

LONDON,

Printed for the Author, for the Use and Benefit of a Religious Society, 1697.

OF THE GUIDANCE OF THE Spirit of GOD.

The Judgment *of Sir* Matthew Hale *concerning it, in his* Contemplations on the Magnet, *c.* 15. *p.* 132.

"THE *Magnet* hath not only its intrinſick, active Principle, its Form from "which its Motions proceed; but there is alſo "a common Magnetiſm of the Earth and its "Effluxes, that greatly aſſiſt, excite, and direct "its Motions.

"*Animals and Vegetables* have not only their "intrinſick, ſpecifical, vital Principles of their "ſpecifical Motions and Operations, but the

"Sun and its Heat and Influence is an univerſal, "adjuvant, exciting Principle of all vital and "ſentient Operations.

"And not only the ancient Philoſophers, as "*Ariſtotle* and *Plato*, and their ſeveral Com- "mentators, as *Simplicius*, *Themiſtius*, *Alex-* "*ander Aphrodiceus*, *Avicen*, and *Averroes*, but "alſo the Jewiſh Doctors, and the Chriſtian "Philoſophers and Divines for ſome Ages after "Chriſt, did think, that, beſides the individual "intellectual Soul of every Man, there was "alſo a certain *Common Intelligent Nature*, or "Being, ſubſtituted by Almighty God, whoſe "Office it was to illuminate the humane Soul, "to excite actual Intellection in it, and to com- "municate unto it theſe common intellectual "Principles, which ordinarily and generally "obtain in all Men, and ſtood in relation to "the humane Intellectual Soul, as the Sun "and its Light and Influence ſtands in rela- "tion to vital Natures in the Lower World: "And this they call *Intellectus Agens*, which "*Averroes* ſuppoſeth to be *Ultima Intelli-* "*gentiarum ſeparatarum*, and deputed to the "actuating and exciting of Intellection in "Men.

"This Opinion hath been (poſſibly upon "Reaſons probable enough) laid aſide for ma- "ny Ages in the Chriſtian Church: the Uſe "therefore that I make of it only is this, That

"though

"though this Opinion ſeems to be dark and "obſcure, and not bottom'd upon a clear Evi- "dence, yet it carries with it and under it an "Adumbration of a great and real Truth, "though they attained not a full, clear, diſtinct "diſcovery of it: Therefore as the Apoſtle elſe- "where in another Caſe told the *Athenians*, "that that God, whom they ignorantly wor- "ſhipped, *Him declare I unto you*, Acts 17. 23. "ſo, with ſome variation, I may with humility "ſay, that ſecret, unſeen, and ſpiritual Power, "which theſe ancient Philoſophers did not di- "ſtinctly underſtand, but groped after it, and "celebrated by the Name of *Intellectus Agens*, "I am now endeavouring to declare.

"Almighty GOD, as he is every where by "his Eſſential Preſence, ſo he is every where "by his Powerful Influence; and as he is the "Univerſal Productive and Conſerving Cauſe "of all things in the World, ſo he is more in- "timate unto, and effective of every thing "in the World by his Efficacious Influence, "than any ſecond created Cauſe in the World; "for they are all but his Inſtruments, and "therefore their Cauſality is ſtill but in and "from the Virtue and Influence of the firſt "Cauſe.

"And this Influx of the Firſt Cauſe, the prime "Efficient, Almighty God, is by him ordina- "rily communicated, effuſed, and proportioned

"according to the ſeveral Natures of Created "Beings; though, according to his wiſe good "Pleaſure, he ſometimes is pleaſed to do it in "a different manner for excellent Ends, *pro Im-* "*perio Voluntatis.*

"And therefore in Matters that are *ſimply* "*natural*, this ordinary Efflux of the Divine In- "fluence is ſuited to that common Law of Na- "ture, that he hath ſettled in the World, and "governs ſuch things according to thoſe inſti- "tuted, regular, natural Laws.

"But unto an *Intellectual Nature*, ſuch as is "that of Man, endued with Underſtanding and "Will, this Divine Efflux is communicated in "a kind proportionable to thoſe Faculties of "the humane Soul; and therefore theſe Ef- "fluxes of the Divine Influence are commu- "nicated *in two kinds:* 1. By way of *Illumi-* "*nation*, in relation to the Underſtanding Fa- "culty. 2. By way of Perſuaſion, *Inclination*, "and Incitation, in relation to the Will and "Affections, although there are *many other* "*kind of Effluxes* of the Divine Spirit and In- "fluence: as the Gift of *bodily Strength*, as "that of *Samſon*, *Judges* 16. 20. the Gift of "*curious Workmanſhip*, as that of *Aholiab*, and "*Beſaliel*, *Exod.* 36. 1. the Spirit of *Majeſty* "*and Government*, as that of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 10. "9. the Gifts of *Propheſying*, *Tongues*, *Miracles*, "1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 9. for theſe were extraordinary

"Effluxes

"Effluxes given out upon ſpecial Occaſions, "and for ſpecial Ends, though even in moſt "of them, and other extraordinary Gifts of "the like nature, the Underſtanding and "Will were much concerned and wrought "upon.

"1. As to the *Illumination of the Underſtand-* "*ing*, certainly what the Sun is to the ſentient "Eye, that, and much more, is Almighty God "to the Mind of Man: *Pſal.* 36. 9. *In thy* "*Light ſhall we ſee Light.* John 1. 9. *This is* "*the true Light that enlightneth every Man that* "*cometh into the World.*

"2. As to the *Inclination* and *Bending of the* "*Will*, it is true, the Will is naturally free, but "yet it is eſſentially ſubject unto the God that "made it; and the operation of the Divine "Influence upon the Will ordinarily is but per- "ſuaſive, and therefore ordinarily reſiſtible: "thus the old World reſiſted the merciful ſtriv- "ing of the Divine Influence, *Gen.* 6. 3. *My* "*Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with Man.* Acts "7. 51. *Ye always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt:* but "the Powerful God hath ſo great an Efficacy, "and hath ſo intimate an acceſs into the Minds "of Men, that he can when he pleaſeth, and "doubtleſs ſometimes doth, irreſiſtibly bend "and incline the Will unto himſelf, according "to his good Pleaſure, *Pſal.* 110. 3. *Thy Peo-* "*ple ſhall be willing in the day of thy Power.* It

"is an excellent Expreſſion, *Prov.* 21. 1. *The* "*Heart of the King is in the Hands of the Lord,* "*as the Rivers of Water he turneth it whitherſo-* "*ever he will.* A good Artiſt will guide a "Stream of Water to what place, and in what "manner, he pleaſeth, in the ſame Level, and "yet without any violence offered to the natu-"ral Motion of the Water, which in all thoſe "Motions is kept entirely ſuitable to its Nature: "And with the ſame and much greater facility "the God of Heaven can, and often doth, in-"fallibly Guide the Hearts of Men, yea, of "Kings, and yet without Force or Violation of "its natural Liberty.

"There was *never any Age nor People* in the "World that was *wholly deſtitute of this Divine* "*Efflux* upon their Underſtandings and Wills: "it is as *Univerſal and Common* as the Light "and Influence of the Heavens; only upon "ſome in all Ages it was more ſpecial and ef-"fectual than upon others, even in the Gentile "World. I have always eſteemed thoſe excel-"lent Men among *the Heathen* famous for Wiſ-"dom, Juſtice, Piety, and Knowledge, as Men "illuminated and guided by this Divine Influ-"ence, though poſſibly communicated to them "in a more ſignal manner than to other Men: "Such were *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Zeno Citticus*, *Solon*, "*Lycurgus*, *Pythagoras*, *Tully*, *Seneca*, *Ariſtotle*, "and divers other excellent Philoſophers,

"Mora-

"Moraliſts, and Law-givers, among the Gen-
"tiles; who were by the Influence of the
"Divine Spirit excited, illuminated, and in-
"ſtructed for the Benefit of themſelves and
"the reſt of Mankind, and to prepare the
"Heathen World for the Reception of greater
"Light.

"When it pleaſed God to ſelect unto himſelf
"and his ſpecial Government, the Family of
"*Abraham*, and his Deſcendants, *the Jewiſh Na-*
"*tion*, he ſets them in *the middle of the Ha-*
"*bitable World*, like a Beacon upon a Hill, to
"be a kind of Common Inſtruction to the reſt
"of Mankind; and for that purpoſe, made them
"ſignal to all the World by his ſpecial Govern-
"ment over them, by Miracles, Signs and
"Wonders; by giving them Laws from Hea-
"ven in great Majeſty and Terrour; by com-
"mitting to them the Divine Oracles; by
"raiſing up Prophets and Men ſpecially inſpired
"by an Extraordinary Spirit, and by effuſing
"among them a greater Meaſure of the In-
"fluence of his Sacred Spirit. For (that I
"may ſay it once for all) it hath been always
"the Method of the Divine Wiſdom and Good-
"neſs, when he ſends out the greater Meaſure
"of this Influx, whereof I ſpeak, the Divine
"Providence accompanies that Efflux with ſuit-
"able external Means to render it the more
"effectual, and the more agreeable to the man-

"ner of the Reception of the humane Under-
"ſtanding: But when *the Meſſias* came into
"the World with the Meſſage of the Glorious
"Goſpel, the Sun was as it were in its Meri-
"dian; and as the means of Illumination and
"Converſion of the World unto God was more
"effectual and univerſal, ſo was alſo the Efflux
"and Irradiation of the Divine Influence upon
"the Souls of Men more vigorous, diffuſive,
"and univerſal.

"And as the miraculous *Gifts* of the Spirit
"of God appeared in the Miracles of Chriſt
"and his Apoſtles, the Gifts of Tongues, of
"Healing Diſeaſes, of Prophecy, and the like,
"to confirm and eſtabliſh Mens Minds in the
"Faith, Belief, and Obedience of the Goſpel;
"ſo neither was this all: but the *ſecret and*
"*effectual Influence* of the ſame Bleſſed Spirit
"appeared in Illumination of the Minds of
"Men, in perſuading and mightily ſubduing
"their Wills to the Belief and Obedience of
"the Truth, in converting Mens Minds unto
"God, and placing them in their juſt and due
"Habitude to Almighty God. And this, ac-
"cording to the various Workings thereof, is
"ſometimes called the Spirit of Regeneration,
"the Spirit of Renovation, the Spirit of San-
"ctification, the Spirit of Holineſs, the Spirit
"of Adoption, the Spirit of Prayer and Suppli-
"cation, the Spirit of Life, *&c.* according to

"the

"the various Energies that this great Effuſion "of the Influences of the Bleſſed Spirit had up- "on the Minds of Men.

"And this great and more diffuſive and ef- "fectual Effuſion of this Influence under the "Goſpel was no other than what was prophe- "ſied of by the ancient Prophets, *Iſa.* 25. 7. *I* "*will deſtroy in this Mountain, the covering caſt* "*upon the Face of all People.* Iſa. 11. 9. *The* "*Earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledge of the* "*Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* Iſa. 54. "13. *All thy Children ſhall be taught of the Lord.* "Iſa. 59. 20. *This is my Covenant that I will* "*make with them, my Spirit, that is upon thee,* "*and the Words which I have put in thy Mouth,* "*ſhall not depart from thee, nor from thy Seed,* "*nor from thy Seeds Seed.* Ezek. 36. 27. *I will* "*put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk* "*in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do* "*them.* Iſa. 44. 3. *I will pour out my Spirit* "*upon thy Seed.* Joel 2. 28. *I will pour out my* "*Spirit upon all Fleſh.* And this Energy of the "Divine Influence appears, 1. By a ſecret Irra- "diation and *Illumination* of the Underſtanding. "2. By a powerful Perſuaſion and *Inclining* of "the Will; both which, as they were with a "more vigorous and effectual Diſpenſation "under the firſt breaking out of the Light of "the Goſpel, ſo they do accompany the Publi- "cation of it unto this day, and ſhall unto the

"end

"end of the World; though by reaſon of the "Corruption of the Lives and Manners of "Mankind, not with equal Succeſs in all "Ages.

We have here the *Judgment* and Belief of this Great and Good Man of a *Divine Efflux* upon the Underſtandings and Wills of Men, and that even among the Heathen, thoſe ſo famed for *Wiſdom*, *Juſtice*, *Piety*, and *Knowledge*, were Illuminated and Guided by a Divine Influence. And we have here alſo the *Ground* of this his Judgment. 1. *Obſervations* in Nature. 2. The *Sentiments* of Learned and Underſtanding Men, Philoſophers in all Ages. 3. The *Authority* of the Sacred Scriptures; to which, he elſewhere adds his own Experience. And whereas he had in ſome things changed his Opinion, as he ſaw cauſe, from what it was in his younger time, this he received early, as appears by ſome of his Firſt Writings, and retain'd conſtantly to the laſt, as appears by his *Treatiſe of Humility*, which he wrote upon my Motion, not long before his laſt Sickneſs.

In his *Treatiſe of Wiſdom, and the Fear of God*, after other particulars of the Wiſdom of the Fear of God, he adds, in the 10*th* place: *But beſides all this, there is yet a Secret but a moſt Certain Truth, that highly improveth that Wiſdom, which the Fear of the Lord bringeth, and that is this, That thoſe that truly fear God have* a Se-

a Secret Guidance *from a higher Wiſdom, than what is barely Humane; namely,* by the Spirit of Truth and Wiſdom, *that doth really and truly, but ſecretly prevent and direct them. And let no Man think that this is a piece of* Fanaticiſm. *Any Man that ſincerely and truly fears Almighty God, relies upon Him, calls upon Him for his Guidance and Direction, hath it as really as the Son hath the Counſel and Direction of his Father: and though the Voice be not audible, nor the Direction* always *perceptible to Senſe, yet it is equally as real as if a Man heard the Voice ſaying,* This is the Way, walk in it. *And this Secret Direction of Almighty God is* principally *ſeen in Matters relating to the Good of the Soul: but it may* alſo *be found in the Great and Momentous Concerns of this Life, which a Good Man, that fears God, and begs his Direction, ſhall very often, if not at all times, find.* And in his *Treatiſe of Humility,* ſpeaking of this Guidance and Direction of Almighty God, in relation to a double End; 1. The Salvation and Happineſs of the Soul. 2. In all the Walk and Concern of this Life; as to this latter he ſaith; *The Air doth not more naturally yield to our Attraction in Reſpiration, or to inſinuate it ſelf into thoſe ſpaces that are receptive of it, than the Divine Aſſiſtance, Guidance, and Beneficence doth to the Deſires, Exigencies, and Wants of an humble Soul, ſenſible of its own Emptineſs and Deficiency,*

and

and imploring the Direction, Guidance, and Bleſſing of the moſt Wiſe and Bountiful God. And then adds, *I can call* my own Experience *to witneſs, that even in the External Actions, Occurrences and Incidences of my whole Life, I was never diſappointed of* the beſt Guidance and Direction, *when in Humility and Senſe of my own Deficiency, and diffidence of my own Ability to direct my ſelf, or to grapple with the Difficulties of my Life, I have, with Humility and Sincerity, implored the Secret Direction and Guidance of the Divine Wiſdom and Providence.* This he ſpeaks of the ſecret Guidance by the Spirit of Truth, by *Illumination* of the Underſtanding, and *Inclination* of the Will; but there is another Secret Guidance by a *Providential* Diſpoſal of Occurrences, which he doth not here exclude, yet ſeems more eſpecially to intend, when he afterward appeals to the Experience of others.

I have alſo obſerved, as well from what he hath ſaid upon ſeveral Occaſions, as from divers Paſſages in his Writings, that he had from his younger time, in all his Life, not only a great reſpect to this ſecret Guidance of the Spirit of God, but alſo ſo great a Senſe of the Malice, Subtlety, and Energy of the Evil Spirits, as made him very vigilant againſt them. And I doubt not but his conſtant and reverend Attendance to that Holy Conduct, and his

Vigilance

Vigilance againſt the Wiles and Devices of thoſe inviſible Enemies, were a principal Means whereby he became ſo Great and Good a Man as he was.

This is *genuine Chriſtianity*, and therefore it cannot but move Indignation in the Hearts of True Chriſtians, to ſee ſo Great and Noble a Principle of their Religion to be ſo unworthily expos'd, contemned and reproached, as this hath been in our Times, partly by ſenſual Bruits, partly by conceited animal Pretenders to Reaſon, and partly by inconſiderate Oppoſers of Enthuſiaſm. Nay, it is a Principle not peculiar to the times of the Incarnation of the Eternal *Logos*, and ſucceeding Ages, but made manifeſt by that Light which enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World, unto all pious and virtuous Souls from the beginning: and it is a dangerous ſign of an empty, bewidowed, deſerted Soul, for any Man to ſpeak ſlightly or irreverently of ſo Holy a Principle. That Excellent Philoſopher and Emperor *Antoninus*, beſides divers other Paſſages to the purpoſe, hath expreſſed himſelf in one place in the very words before uſed by our Author. *Seneca* affirms it; *Bonus Vir ſine Deo nemo eſt*; beſides many Paſſages to this purpoſe: And *Cicero*, beſides what more largely elſewhere, *Nemo vir Magnus ſine aliquo Afflatu Divino unquam fuit.* *Socrates* is notorious, and *Plato*, and his Followers *Plotinus*, *Porphirius*,

Porphyrius, *Jamblicus*, *Proclus*, &c. are known and confeſs'd to have been of the ſame Judgment; as alſo the *Chaldaick* and *Egyptian* Philoſophers. The ſame is obſerv'd of *Democritus*, That he thought that there were no Men Wiſe beſides thoſe who were inſpir'd with a Divine Influence: And *Theophraſtus*, and indeed all the better Philoſophers, are noted to have had the ſame Sentiments. And even *Ariſtotle* himſelf, as great a Rationaliſt as he was, hath plainly expreſſed himſelf to have been of the ſame Judgment, in ſeveral places. In one among the reſt to this effect: *They who are moved by a Divine Inſtinct ought not to conſult Humane Reaſon, but follow the Interior Inſtinct; becauſe they are moved by a better Principle than Humane Reaſon.* And that the ſame Sentiments were among the *Gentiles* in very ancient times, we may obſerve in the Sacred Scriptures, *Dan.* 4. 8. and 5. 11. and long before, *Job* 32. 8: 33. 14, 15, 16. and *Gen.* 41. 38. and 39. 3. and before, 26. 28. and before that, 21, 22. And for the *Jews*, it is very plain that in thoſe Excellent Books of *Wiſdom* and *Eccleſiaſticus*, by the Name of *Wiſdom*, this Divine Influence and Conduct is intended.

And for the *Chriſtians*, the Doctrine of our Saviour and his Apoſtles is ſo expreſs to this purpoſe, that they who would evade the genuine Senſe of their Words, are forced to ſtrain their

their Wits to the utmoſt, and their Conſciences too, I doubt, if they be not ſtupified before hand. I need not recite the places, which every one may have recourſe to at pleaſure; and therefore it may be ſufficient to note them under ſeveral Heads; as,

I. The *Predictions* of the Prophets, *Iſa.* 44. 3: 54. 13. (recited by our Saviour, *Jo.* 6. 45.) *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. *Ezek.* 11. 19: 36. 26, 27. *Joel* 2. 28. recited by St. *Peter*, and applyed not only to the Chriſtians then, but to thoſe alſo who ſhould come after, *Act.* 2. 17: 33. 39. *Zech.* 12. 10. *Mat.* 3. 11.

II. *Promiſes* of our Saviour, *Luk.* 11. 13. *Jo.* 7. 39: 14. 16, 17, 23, 26: 15. 26: 16. 7. *Lu.* 24. 49. *Act.* 1. 4, 8: 2. 38.

III. The *Accompliſhment* of theſe Predictions and Promiſes.

1. In the Original viſible Effuſion on the day of *Pentecoſt*, upon the Apoſtles and Primitive Chriſtians, *Act.* 2. 2, 3, 4, 33.

2. By a Miniſterial Communication, *Act.* 8. 15, 17: 10. 44: 19. 6. *Gal.* 3. 2, 5, 14. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 8.

3. By internal Reſidence and Operation, Illumination and Sanctification, *Rom.* 8. 9, 11. 1 *Cor.* 3. 16: 6. 19. *Eph.* 2. 22. 2 *Tim.* 1. 14. 1 *Jo.* 2. 24. *Gal.* 4. 6. 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 8. 2 *Cor.* 13. 2. 13.

4. By

4. By ſpecial and particular Manifeſtation and Conduct, variouſly exhibited; as,

1. By Viſions and Revelations, *Act.* 9. 10, 12: 10. 10: 11. 28: 16. 9: 18. 9: 22. 17. 1 *Cor.* 11. 23: 12. 4, 6, 10: 14. 6, 24, 29, 30, 31. 2 *Cor.* 12. 1, 2, 7. (v. *Lu.* 2. 26.) *Gal.* 1. 12: 2. 2.
2. By Allocutions, *Act.* 8. 29: 10. 19: 13. 2, 4: 23. 9.
3. By Impulſes and Excitations, (v. *Lu.* 2. 27.) *Act.* 4. 8, 13, 31: 5. 20.
4. By Prohibitions, *Act.* 16. 6: 20. 23: 21. 4, 11. and Reſtraints, *Act.* 16. 7.

IV. Admonitions.

1. How to obtain it, *Jo.* 14. 15, 16, 17, 23. *Act.* 5. 32. *Lu.* 11. 12. *Ja.* 1. 5. *Rev.* 3. 20. 1 *Pet.* 4. 13.
2. To follow and obey it, *Rom.* 8. 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14. *Gal.* 5. 16, 18, 25. *Eph.* 4. 30.
3. To try the Spirits, 1 *Jo.* 4. 1: 1 *Cor.* 14. 29.

More might be added, but theſe are more than enough. And to theſe it would not be hard to add a *true Catholick Interpretation and Comment*, that is, The Sentiments of *the moſt ancient Chriſtian Writers*, and others of the moſt Eminent of after Ages; ſuch as *Hermas*, *Juſtine*, *Tatian*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Novatian*, *Hilary*, *Nazianzen*, *Ambroſe*, *Hierom*, *Auſtin* and

and many others; but it would be too long for this place and occaſion. And therefore to make ſhort Work, inſtead of that, I will here repreſent their Sentiments in ſome ſhort Notes of an Eminent and moſt Learned Annotator, who was well acquainted with them, and doth ſometimes interſperſe ſome of their Teſtimonies in his Writings: It is the Famous *Hugo Grotius*. *Theſe*, ſaith he, upon *Mat.* 18. 10. (who dedicate themſelves to God with a true Faith, and thereupon are accounted his peculiar People) *God, as he doth favour them with a peculiar Providence, ſo he ſeems to give to each an Angel Guardian to guide and aſſiſt them, either perpetually or certainly, until they come to* the full Poſſeſſion of the Divine Spirit: *For ſo I ſee the Ancient Chriſtians did believe.* And in his Pref. to his Annot. upon the Epiſtle to the *Romans*. *Into the Heart purified by Faith, as into a clean Veſſel, God doth infuſe his Spirit; I mean the Spirit of Chriſt full of Love of God, and of our Neighbour, and of all Goodneſs.* —— *Thoſe who have this Spirit of God, and carefully keep it, God doth account as born of Him, and like unto Him; to them he gives a certain Right to Heavenly and Eternal Good Things.* —— *Neither is the Heart purified but by Faith in Chriſt; nor is the Spirit infuſed but into a Heart ſo purified; nor doth he plainly own for his any but who are endowed with that Spirit.* Upon *Luke* 22. 3. *As they who religiouſly obey*

the Divine Admonitions, at length receive the Indwelling Spirit; ſo they who readily conſent to the Suggeſtions of the Devil, at length, God deſerting them, become the Slaves of Satan. Upon *Jo.* 5. 45. *Thoſe (to whom the Goſpel is Preached) become taught of God,* that is, *if they would, if they be greedy of it, if they do not reject the Benefits offered, and even forc'd upon them. They will have no need to have reçourſe to Learned Men, that from them they may learn the Myſteries of the Old Teſtament.* Upon *Eph.* 1. 17. *The Spirit of God which is given to Believers, doth, among other things, imprint alſo Wiſdom in their Souls, not that of the things of this World, of which Philoſophers did boaſt, but of thoſe things which conduce to a better Life. The ſame Spirit doth reveal alſo to thoſe who are his, things future and ſecret, which cannot be known by humane Means.* Upon 1 *Jo.* 2. 20. *The Spirit doth ſuggeſt to us in all Circumſtances, both the Precepts of Chriſt, and ſuch Hints or Notices as are meet for the Occaſion.* v. 27. *What we are to do in every Circumſtance: For there are certain Differences, which Times, Places, and Perſons, require. Therefore is there often need of Admonition to hit the way of our Duty.* See *Jer.* 31. 34. Jo. 6. 45. and, if you pleaſe, *Seneca Epiſt.* 94. And upon 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 9. *The Holy Ghoſt teacheth you concerning all things to be done. By how much the more there is of the Spirit, ſo much the leſs need is there of Preſcripts.*

This

This Place is not to be underſtood of the General Precept, but of ſpecial Determinations, as all Things, Perſons, and Times do require. And *Gal.* 5. 18. *Thoſe who are led by the Spirit, as now of Age, have no need of the Law, the Guardian of their Youth.* And *Rom.* 8. 4. *Thoſe who walk after the Spirit,* he interprets, *thoſe who having obtained the Holy Spirit, do conſtantly obey its Motions:* and afterwards, *v.* 5. *They that are after the Spirit,* he interprets, *thoſe who are poſſeſſed by the Spirit of God; which doth not now come to paſs, but by Chriſt.* And, *v.* 12. he notes, *God hath given his Spirit that we ſhould uſe it;* and again, *So great a Gueſt will be treated with Care; otherwiſe he will bid farewell to his Lodging.* And to conclude, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23. *Spirit here,* ſaith he, *is that Holy Spirit, inhabiting in the Souls of Chriſtians, and if it be carefully kept, adhering to Souls unto Death, and after Death even to the Reſurrection;* and then referrs to what he had ſaid, 1 *Cor.* 15. 44. to *Hierom* upon *Gal.* 5. and recites, to the ſame purpoſe, the Words of *Philo, Irenæus, Tatianus, Clem. Alexandrinus,* and *Tertullian.* More might be added; but this is enough to ſhew the Mind of this great Man, concerning the Neceſſity of our having the Spirit of God dwelling in us, the Effects of his Reſidence in Light and Conduct, and our Duty how to treat it.

And that this is alſo the Belief of *the Church of England*, (however ſome of late have commonly preſum'd to ſpeak, if not deſpitefully and reproachfully, yet too ſlightly of ſo great and holy a Principle of our Religion) may appear, by the moſt Authentick Evidence that can be, her moſt ſolemn Addreſſes to Almighty God in divers Collects for this very purpoſe: As, for all Perſons to be *Baptized*, before they be Baptized, *to give his Holy Spirit to them, that they may be born again*, &c. and after they be Baptized, *to give his Holy Spirit to them, that they may continue his Servants, and attain his Promiſes*: So likewiſe for all Perſons *Confirmed, to ſtrengthen them with the Holy Ghoſt, and daily increaſe in them his manifold Gifts of Grace*: before Impoſition of Hands, and then again together with the Impoſition of Hands, *that they may daily increaſe in his Holy Spirit*; and again afterward, that *his Holy Spirit may ever be with them, and ſo lead them*, &c. and laſtly, for all the Congregation upon ſeveral Occaſions; as, upon the Nativity of our Lord, that they *may daily be renewed by his Holy Spirit*. Upon the 19*th* Sunday after *Trinity*, that his *Holy Spirit may in all things Direct and Rule our Hearts*. Upon the *firſt* Sunday in *Lent*, *that we may ever obey his Godly Motions*. Upon *Eaſter-Day*, *that as by thy ſpecial Grace preventing us, thou doſt put into our Minds good Deſires; ſo by thy continual Help*

we

we may bring the ſame to good Effect. Upon the *fifth* Sunday after *Eaſter, that by his Holy Inſpiration we may think thoſe things that be good, and by his merciful Guiding may perform the ſame:* and others to the like Effect; as, upon the *Sunday* after *Aſcenſion, Whitſunday,* the 13*th* Sunday after *Trinity,* the Collect at the beginning of the *Communion Service.* And at every *Morning* and *Evening Service,* all are admoniſhed to *beſeech him to give us his Holy Spirit.* And in the Coll. for *Grace,* we pray to God, *that all our doings may be ordered by his Governance:* and in the *Litany, to indue us with the Grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our Lives according to his Holy Word.* In the Ordering of *Deacons,* this Queſtion is firſt to be asked by the Biſhop, *Do you truſt that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt to take upon you this Office and Miniſtration,* &c? In the Ordering of *Prieſts,* the Biſhop ſays, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt for the Office and Work of a Prieſt in the Church of God,* &c. And in the Conſecration of a *Biſhop,* the Arch-Biſhop ſays, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt for the Office and Work of a Biſhop,* &c. and at each is ſung the Hymn, *Come Holy Ghoſt,* &c. And in the Exhortation in the Commination, this is mentioned as one of the Conditions of our Pardon, *viz. If we will be ordered by the Governance of his Holy Spirit.* And in the Articles of Religion, Art. 17. are mentioned together

Godly Perſons and ſuch as feel in themſelves the Working of the Spirit of Chriſt, mortifying, &c.

To this Authority of the Church, I will ſubjoyn the Judgment of one of her Sons, who, though at firſt it ſeems he was carried away with the common Prejudice of the Age, yet afterward, upon better conſideration, extricated himſelf, and recover'd a better Judgment, and has in few words ſaid what is much to the purpoſe.

That God himſelf affords his Intimacies and Converſes to the better Souls, which are prepar'd for it.

I confeſs *the proud and phantaſtick* Pretences *of many of the conceited Melancholiſts in this Age, to Divine Communion, have* prejudiced *divers intelligent Perſons againſt the Belief of any ſuch happy Vouchſafement; ſo that they conclude the Doctrine of Immediate Communion with the Deity in this Life to be but an high-flown Notion of warm Imagination, and over-luſcious Self-Flattery: and I acknowledge I have my ſelf had Thoughts of this nature, ſuppoſing* Communion with God *to be nothing elſe but the Exerciſe of Vertue, and that Peace and thoſe Comforts which naturally reſult from it.*

But I have conſidered *ſince, That God's more near and immediate imparting himſelf to the Soul that is prepar'd for that Happineſs by Divine Love, Humility, and Reſignation in the way of a Vital Touch, and Senſe, is a thing poſſible in it ſelf, and will be a great part of our Heaven;*

That

That Glory is begun in Grace, and God is pleaſed to give ſome excellent Souls the happy Antepaſt: That holy Men in ancient times have ſought and gloried in this Enjoyment, and never complain ſo ſorely, as when it was with-held and interrupted: That the Expreſſions of Scripture run infinitely this way, and the beſt of modern good Men do, from their own Experience, atteſt it: That this ſpiritualizeth Religion, and renders its Enjoyments more comfortable and delicious: That it keeps the Soul under a vivid ſenſe of God, and is a grand Security againſt Temptation: That it holds it ſteddy amidſt the Flatteries of a proſperous State, and gives it the moſt grounded Anchorage and Support amidſt the Waves of an adverſe Condition: That 'tis the nobleſt Encouragement to Vertue, and the higheſt Aſſurance of an happy Immortality. I ſay, I conſidered *theſe weighty Things, and wonder'd at the Careleſsneſs and Prejudice of Thoughts, that occaſion'd my ſuſpecting the Reality of ſo glorious a Priviledge: I ſaw how little Reaſon there is in denying Matters of inward Senſe, becauſe our ſelves do not feel them, or cannot form an Apprehenſion of them in our Minds: I am convinc'd that things of guſt and reliſh muſt be judged by the ſentient and vital Faculties, and not by the noetical Exerciſes of ſpeculative Underſtandings: And upon the whole, I* believe *infinitely, that the Divine Spirit affords its ſenſible Preſence, and immediate Beatifick Touch to ſome* Rare Souls,

who are diveſted of carnal Self, and mundane Pleaſures, abſtracted from the Body by Prayer and Holy Meditation; ſpiritual in their Deſires, and calm in their Affections; devout Lovers of God and Vertue, and tenderly affectionate to all the World; ſincere in their Aims, and circumſpect in their Actions; inlarged in their Souls, and clear in their Minds. Theſe, I think, are the Diſpoſitions *that are* requiſite *to fit us for* Divine Communion: *And God tranſacts not in this near way, but with prepared Spirits, who are thus diſpoſed for the Manifeſtation of his Preſence, and his Influence; and ſuch, I believe, he never fails to bleſs with theſe happy fore-taſts of Glory. But for thoſe that are Paſſionate and Conceited, Turbulent and Notional, Confident and Immodeſt, Imperious and Malicious; that doat upon Trifles, and run fiercely into the ways of a Sect; that are lifted up in the Apprehenſion of the glorious Prerogatives of themſelves and their Party, and ſcorn all the World beſides; for ſuch, I ſay, be their Pretenſions what they will, to Divine Communion, Illapſes, and Diſcoveries, I believe them not; their Fancies abuſe them, or they would us: For what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs, or the Spirit of the Holy One with thoſe, whoſe Genius and Ways are ſo unlike Him? But the other* Excellent Souls *I deſcribed, will as certainly be viſited by the Divine Preſence and Converſe, as the Chryſtalline Streams are with the Beams of*

Light,

Light, or the fitly prepared Earth, whoſe Seed is in it ſelf, will be actuated by the Spirit of Nature.

There is *a late Writer* of no mean Learning and Parts, and Authority too among thoſe of his own Party, who reckons the *Deſpiſing of the Holy Spirit, and his Operations* now, to be a Sin of the ſame Nature with the Apoſtacy of the *Jews* by Idolatry of old, and afterwards by rejecting of our Saviour at his coming: and yet in deteſtation of Enthuſiaſm, *utterly abandons* all Impulſes and Motions *to Things and Actions, which are not acknowledged Duties in themſelves, evidenced by the Word of Truth*, &c. under the Name of *Irrational Impreſſions*, and *violent Inclinations:* and what ſome Men intend by *Impulſes*, he ſays, he knows not. Indeed they who reject all ſuch things, reject they know not what. And did they thereby only hurt themſelves, it might be thought a juſt Puniſhment: but ſuch confident Aſſertions in Print may not only be hurtful to Men, but alſo injurious to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, which is not to be limited by Mens Conceits. The *Jews* heretofore had the Favour *to inquire of God*, and receive *Anſwers* and *Direction* in their ſpecial Exigences: and if the Chriſtians are not allowed that Favour now, it may be thought that the State of Chriſtians is inferior to that of the Jews then, in a Matter of great Importance;

Importance; or that the Chriſtians now are, as the latter Jews were, fallen from the Integrity of the true Chriſtian State: Nor can I conceive any reaſon why Chriſtians ſhould not have ſome ſuch Means for this purpoſe, as the ancient Jews had, but that every Chriſtian ought to have a Divine Oracle in his own Breaſt, by the Reſidence of the Spirit of God there, if we were indeed ſuch as our Profeſſion doth require, and oblige us to be, that is, truly Spiritual, and Heavenly-minded. It doth therefore concern us to inquire, whether the Fault be not in our ſelves, if God doth not anſwer us, as it was with *Saul*, when God was departed from him, rather than to diſhonour our Profeſſion, by arguing againſt the Truth to cover our Shame? and ſince the Lord's Ear is not heavy that it cannot hear, whether our Sins have not interpoſed between our God and us, that he will not hear? Certainly we often need a Wiſdom more than Humane in many Caſes, wherein the General Preſcripts are not ſufficient.

For, as many things are *lawful*, which may not be *expedient*; ſo many things may be *expedient*, or *neceſſary*, which may not be *acknowledged Duties in themſelves*, *evidenced by the Word of Truth*, the written Word; and to the ſucceſsful Performance of acknowledged Duties certain *Circumſtances* may be, and often are ſo neceſſary,

neceſſary, that unleſs duly obſerved, all Endeavours would be fruſtrate: and all theſe Expediences and Circumſtances may be, and frequently are, ſuch as are not diſcernable by us Mortals, without ſome *Notice* from more Intelligent Beings. If therefore the All-ſeeing, Wiſe, and Gracious God, be pleaſed, either immediately by his own Spirit, or mediately by any of the Inviſible Miniſters of his Providence, to afford any ſuch Divine Favours to ſuch Mortals as are duly diſpoſed for the ſame; if taking notice of the Sincerity of his Servant, he be pleaſed, by any ſecret *Impreſſion* upon his Heart or Mind, or other Notices, to conduct him in theſe things, or in any thing of his Will and Pleaſure, though without manifeſting the Reaſons of it, to exerciſe his Reaſonable Creature to the Subjection of his Intellect to the Divine Wiſdom, as well as his Will to Obedience to his Pleaſure: as he who after competent Experience of this, ſhould be diſobedient to any ſuch Notice, would certainly incurr *Sin* more or leſs, and juſtly deſerve Correction; ſo it would be no leſs *Impiety* againſt that Holy Majeſty, and Miſchief to Men, to raiſe amongſt them any Scandal or Prejudice againſt it, and thereupon a great Indiſpoſition for it, by any *undue Oppoſition of Fanaticiſm*, without ſufficient Diſtinction and Caution, than it is *Impudence* and Inconſiderateneſs in others, to expoſe themſelves

ſelves and their Followers to the Deluſions of Evil Spirits by high Pretences to ſuch Divine and extraordinary Favours, without any Regard to, or Notice of thoſe ſpecial Qualifications, and Cautions for Tryal of Spirits, which are neceſſary to capacitate them for ſuch Favour, and to ſecure them againſt ſuch Deluſions. It requires therefore no ſmall *Caution*, (to uſe this Author's Expreſſion) that under an invidious Name they reject not ſuch Favours, or calumniate ſuch an Holy Conduct: and, that they eſpecially who reproach others with limiting the Holy Spirit, do not themſelves in this, what in other things they condemn in others, with leſs Reaſon.

And certainly great Caution is likewiſe to be uſed *on the other ſide*, that we preſume not to attribute to the Holy Spirit of God, what is meerly the Imaginations or Effuſions of our own Spirit; what is meerly Humane Invention, or Artifice; and even the Inſpirations and Deluſions of Satan transformed into an Angel of Light. By this means is great Indignity commonly done to the Holy and Pure Spirit: and great Sin contracted by Mens arrogating to themſelves thoſe Gifts and Graces, which they have little of, and recommending themſelves and their Performances upon ſuch high Pretences; and great Scandal given to People to think meanly of ſo great a Principle of our Religion.

There

There are *three Great Means* which God hath provided for us to lead us into all neceſſary Truth: *Natural Reaſon*, *Supernatural Revelation* communicated by Perſons authorized by Divine Commiſſion ſo to do, and *Special Illumination and Direction* of the Holy Spirit. And they who carefully uſe all theſe in their due Order, cannot err. But they who ſet up theſe one againſt another, do uſually run themſelves and lead others into great Errors. And hence it is that ſo great Diſorders and Miſchiefs have through the Subtilty and Energy of Satan been brought into the Church by Perſons pretending to ſome one of theſe in a kind of Oppoſition to ſome other of them: either of Right Reaſon, or of the Pure Word of God; or of the Spirit and Spiritual Worſhip.

I do not doubt but they who pretend moſt to *Right Reaſon*, in oppoſition to Inſpiration, are even therein very ſtrongly inſpired, but by the ſubtile Spirit of Oppoſition, and are in effect as great and pernicious Fanaticks as any, though they leaſt ſuſpect it. But not only thoſe unhappy *Atheiſtical Pretenders* to Reaſon, who deſpiſe all Revelation and Revealed Religion; but ſuch as profeſs themſelves Chriſtians; and not only that *inſolent and preſumptuous Sect*, who aſſert the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and yet make no ſcruple to ſtrain and wreſt them to comply with their pre-conceived Notions;

Notions; but more *Moderate Men*, and such as pretend highest to the Pure Word of God, and to the most pure Spiritual Worship, and cry out against Man-made Divinity, and against Fanaticism too; by indulging too much to their own Conceits, have brought such *Disorders and Mischiefs* into the Church, as are not much to be doubted were the Fruits of the Influences and Impressions of the Spirit of Delusion upon their Mind. Hence are many run from Superstition into Prophaneness; from Idolatry into Sacrilege; from Formality into Contempt or Neglect of the most Solemn Christian Worship; from beggarly Rudiments and Carnal Ordinances, to make light of the Institutions of Christ; from Monkish Austerity, as they call it, into common Indulgence and Gratifications to Sense; from Popish Merit into Carelessness, Worldly-mindedness, Selfishness, and little Concern for the Honour of God, or Salvation of Souls; from the Traditions of Men and Popish Pretences, to deny all, even of the Apostles, the Authority of the Catholick Church, and the Catholick Sense and Interpretation of divers of the Evangelical and Apostolical Precepts and Directions; and, at last, to limit our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount to the times of Persecution, till, at last, by those means, we are grown ripe for a Persecution, or some other severe awakening and purging Judgment. All this,

this, and more that might be noted, we cannot impute meerly to the Weakneſs and Corruption of Men, unleſs we can imagin that all the Powers of Darkneſs have been all the while meer idle Spectators. But if they have been ſo ſubtle and active thus to deceive the Gentiles in theſe latter times, and the beſt of Men have not been exempt from their Aſſaults, it concerns all to beware that they be not deceived by a Spirit of Deluſion under any of theſe Appearances, either of the Good Spirit, or of the Scripture, or of Reaſon: that they embrace not falſe Concluſions inſtead of Right Reaſon, their own Conceits, or the Novel Opinions of ſome Sect, inſtead of the Genuine Senſe of the Scriptures, or Satan transformed for the Spirit of God; *leaſt, by any means, as the Serpent beguiled* Eve *through his Subtilty, their Minds ſhould be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Chriſt.*

And there is no way poſſible to eſcape this but by the Aid, Illumination, and Conduct of the Holy Spirit of God. Nor are any to be believed to be led by that Spirit, when they go out of the way preſcribed by Chriſt, and by his Apoſtles, who were Commiſſioned by Him: for it is the Spirit of Chriſt, and *of his Fulneſs we all receive.* As the Law was our Schoolmaſter to bring us unto Chriſt, ſo is Obſervance of the Preſcripts of the Goſpel deſigned for our Tutourage, to bring us to the Spirit. To that we

we muſt come, or we are none of his: but that way we muſt come, and in that way we muſt keep, or elſe we ſhall be led by the Spirit of Error, and miſtake that for the Spirit of Truth. If we do well conſider the Holy Scriptures, the Nature of the Holy Spirit, and the Fruits of the Spirit, we may learn what *Qualifications* are requiſite to obtain that ineſtimable Treaſure; and by what *Signs and Characters* it may be known and diſtinguiſhed. And thereby we may diſcern that many, who pretend highly to the Spirit, are much out of the way of the true Spirit of God; and many led by the ſubtile Spirit of Antichriſt, under the appearance of an Angel of Light, to undermine the Goſpel and Inſtitutions of Chriſt; to do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, and to raiſe Scandals and Prejudices againſt the Holy Doctrine, which they pretend, and it may be think to aſſert, and to indiſpoſe Men for the Reception of thoſe Graces, which thoſe envious and malicious Spirits may know to be ready to be communicated to them. And this ſhould make others the more cautious, that they be not ſubſervient to, and be made the very Tools of theſe wicked Agents in their Oppoſition, leaſt at laſt they be involved with them in their Condemnation.

The *True way to reduce the miſled People*, is, not to deny or diſſemble the Holy Doctrine, much

much leſs to villifie or reproach it; but plainly to aſſert the Truth, and ſhew them wherein, and by what Means they are miſled from it: 1. That *the Spirit of God* is the moſt precious and deſirable thing in the World, and abſolutely neceſſary; but it is to be *deſired* principally to transform us into its own Nature; to lead us into all neceſſary Truth; to endue us with Power to overcome all our Corruptions, and all Temptations, and to adorn us with all thoſe Graces, which ennoble Humane Nature, and raiſe it above its ſelf, and ſo make us Chriſtians indeed; and to conduct us in all the important Occurrences of our Lives: but to deſire it for Matters of Oſtentation, to glory in Divine Communications, or over-earneſtly ſeek after the Conſolations, through impatience of bearing the Spiritual Croſs, are great Signs that ſuch Souls are either quite out of the way, or have made but little Progreſs. 2. That Satan is often transformed into an Angel of Light; and therefore we muſt be careful to try the Spirits. 3. That *whatever is contrary to Sound Doctrine*, 1 Tim. 1. 10: 2. 1. *to the Doctrine, which is according to Godlineſs*, ibid. 6. 3. *the Doctrine taught by the Apoſtles*, Rom. 16. 17. Gal. 1. 8. *to the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, Jud. 3. cannot be from the true Spirit, the Spirit of Chriſt. 4. That ſuch Spirits as lead into *Diviſions, Separations*, and *Sects*, lead

out of the way of the True Spirit of God: and whatever lead into contempt or diſreſpect of the *Sacred Scriptures*, or any of the *Ordinances* or *Inſtitutions of Chriſt*, are certainly Spirits of Antichriſt, how ſpecious ſoever their Pretences may be: for the Conſcientious and Reverend Uſe of theſe are the very Means whereby Souls are prepared for the Communication of the Spirit of God, and whereby it is ordinarily communicated to them. *Cui Veritas comperta ſine Deo? Cui Deus cognitus ſine Chriſto? Cui Chriſtus exploratus ſine Spiritu Sancto? Cui Spiritus Sanctus accommodatus ſine Fidei Sacramento?* ſaith an ancient and eminent Chriſtian, *Tertul. de Anima, c.* 1. "To whom "is Truth diſcovered without God? To whom "is God known without Chriſt? To whom is "Chriſt manifeſt without the Holy Spirit? To "whom is the Holy Spirit granted without the "Sacrament of Faith? that is, *Baptiſm.* 5. And more particularly in reſpect to ſome amongſt us; That they who aſſert this Doctrine without *Diſtinction* or *Caution*, are not much to be regarded; and if they be Men of Learning, and may be preſumed not to be ignorant what Cautions and Rules are given by Learned and Experienced Chriſtians, to diſtinguiſh the Impoſtures of Evil Spirits from the Conduct or Motions of the Good, are much to be ſuſpected to ſerve another Intereſt then what they

they pretend to those they mislead; and that they all expose People to the Delusions of Evil Spirits, which readily embrace such Advantages. 6. That there were special Reasons why God ordered *Moses* to smite the Waters and the Dust with the Rod, and to take handfuls of Ashes from the Furnace and sprinkle it towards the Heaven, and to erect the Brazen Serpent in the Wilderness, *&c.* to produce the intended effects; and why our Saviour made Clay with Spittle, and anointed the Eyes of the Blind Man, and then bad him wash, and many other such things, for which perhaps no Man did nor doth know the reason; and yet, undoubtedly, if these Orders had not been observed, the Effect had not follow'd. 7. That it is but reasonable that God should give Orders, without declaring the Reason, for Tryal and Exercise of the Subjection of the Intellectual Faculties of his Creatures; and that in such Case, if the Orders be not observed, it is not likely the Effect should follow: and that if there were no more than this Exercise of humble Submission to the Wisdom of God, in *the Christian Sacraments*, it could not be imagined to be the Spirit of Christ, that should lead People to despise or neglect these *Orders* and *Institutions* of Christ: But in them there is more; for Instance, in that of *Baptism*, it is the Solemnity, and external Act of Declaration of

our Engagement in *Covenant* with Chriſt: and the Refuſal of it is as much as to refuſe to Seal and Deliver a Bond; which whoever ſhould refuſe to do, and yet pretend to give Bond, might be looked upon as a Knave or a Cheat: and in that of *the Holy Communion*, there is a great and Solemn Duty of *Recognition* of the abſolute Dominion of the Father by Right of Creation, and of the Son by Right of Redemption, over us and all we are and have; a Symbolical Oblation of our ſelves and of all we have to God, in a *Commemorative Sacrifice* and Repreſentation of the Paſſion of Chriſt before the Father, as the Great Propitiation for the Sins of the World, of as full *import* to all intents and purpoſes to Chriſtians, as were all the Sacrifices of the Jews to them, which were but Types of the ſame; a Holy *Rite of Addreſs* to God the Father, by Chriſt the Mediator, through the Merit and Satisfaction of his Paſſion, by which alone our Prayers and Thankſgivings have acceptance with him; and of *Spiritual Communion* with God in Chriſt, whereby a Divine Power and Vertue is as really communicated to Souls duly diſpoſed, as Vertue went out of him and healed the People, and the Woman who touched the Hem of his Garment. And theſe have been the Sentiments, and this the moſt ſolemn and peculiar Worſhip of the Chriſtian Church, all over the World, from

from the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same, performed every day in most of the great Churches, and every Lord's-Day in all, from the times of the Apostles till the last Age. It is an Ordinance of so great Honour to our Saviour, and Benefit to Souls duly dispos'd, that there can hardly be a greater Evidence of the Prevalence of the Spirit of Antichrist, and of Satan transformed, than Disrespect and Neglect of it, under pretence of a more spiritual Worship: For nothing can be more grievous to that envious and malicious Spirit, than to see that *Passion*, which he had most maliciously procured, to be so honoured all over the World, and applyed to his Confusion; and therefore hath he oppos'd it with all the Subtilty and Malice he could possible. Besides, for People to slight it under pretence of Christ being come to them in the Spirit, is a manifest and dangerous piece of Spiritual Pride so to set up themselves above the Primitive Christians, and St. *Paul* himself, who had so great a Manifestation of the Spirit with them; and therefore another pregnant Evidence of the Spirit of Delusion. And if we do well consider what decays of Charity and Unanimity among Men, and of Piety and Devotion to God, hath in all parts attended the Neglect of this Holy Ordinance, that may be another Evidence of what Spirit they are of, who do neglect it, what-

whatever their Pretences be. But for *all Separatiſts and Sectaries* in general, it is matter of great Caution that the Scriptures are ſo full of Admonitions and Prohibitions againſt *Schiſms* and *Diviſions*, and of Predictions, both by our Saviour himſelf, and by his Apoſtles, both of the Variety of them, and of the Danger, in that ſome of them have that ſpecious Appearance, as to deceive, if it were poſſible, the very Elect. And if we look into the Hiſtory of the Church in former times, we ſhall find little or nothing of the true Spirit among any of any Party of Separatiſts, but much of the Spirit of Error or Deluſion. And therefore when we find a Manifeſtation of the Preſence or Energy of ſome Spirit, and a Concurrence of divers of theſe Indications or Signs, we may be aſſured and confident that it is an Antichriſtian Spirit, be its appearance never ſo ſpecious in other reſpects. And in theſe *two things* eſpecially, have ſuch as have been partakers of the true Spirit, found themſelves to be ſometimes ſtrangely *aſſaulted and tempted* by the ſubtile Adverſary, *viz.* to Spiritual Pride, and undervaluation of other Perſons, and to neglect of the Ordinances of Chriſt, as needleſs to them.

The Way, whereby the ancient Religious Chriſtians were generally preſerved from theſe and ſuch like Snares, was, that they were trained up, as the Sons of the Prophets of old, under ancient experi-

experienced Christians in all kind of Exercises of Humility, Subjection both of Mind and Will, and constant discovery of the Dispositions and Motions of their Hearts to their Superiors, and of all Grace and Vertue. But where both Doctrine and Practice hath been neglected, it is not strange that amongst many Appearances and Pretences there should be found little of Solidity; especially where those noble Heroick Virtues of *Abstraction*, and *Contempt of the World*, *Heavenly-mindedness*, and *continual Attendance to God*, &c. are rejected as *Monkery* and *Superstition*; but all their goodly Appearances and Pretences end, at last, in Emptiness and Scandal. And therefore it concerns all, who have any Care of their Souls, to beware of all such as are out of the Way and Method of the Ancients.

But, on the other side, to take such Offence at the Miscarriages of such as have been led into Error by any seducing Spirit, as therefore to oppose the Conduct of the Spirit of Truth, or any of its Operations, and elude the Holy Scriptures, and undermine the Doctrine thereof, is as certainly the Effect of the Operation of the Spirit of Antichrist, and, in truth, as much Fanaticism as the other, in the contrary Extream. For the *Good Spirit* is as absolutely necessary to be had, as all others to be avoided; for without it we cannot be genuine living Christians, but meer empty formal Professors; of which sort, if

is much to be feared, are the greateſt part both of Conformiſts and Non-Conformiſts amongſt us, if Judgment be made according to our Saviour's Rule of their Fruits, and Fruitfulneſs.

But leſt any well-minded Soul ſhould be troubled with any doubts in this reſpect, we muſt diſtinguiſh between *Having* the Spirit, and the *Manifeſtation* of the Spirit; and between the *Operations* of the Spirit, the *Gifts* of the Spirit, and the *Graces* of the Spirit: and know, that as there may be the Operations of the Spirit, where there are not the Gifts of the Spirit; and the Gifts of the Spirit, where there are not the Graces of the Spirit: ſo, on the other ſide, there may be the *Reſidence* of the Spirit, where there is no ſenſible diſtinguiſhable *Manifeſtation* of the Spirit. For the Operations and Communications of the Spirit are often ſo ſubtile and ſecret in the manner, both in Illumination, and Power, and Inclination of the Will, as are not manifeſt by Senſe, but by Faith only, and we know not how they are wrought in us. But as the moſt deſirable Graces of the Spirit are *Regeneration* and *Effectual Sanctification*, ſo the Fruits and Effects thereof are the moſt infallible Notes of the Preſence of the Good Spirit, which always leads to Mortification of all Carnal and Earthly Affections, and to the Perfection of all Cœleſtial, Angelick and Divine Diſpoſitions in the Soul. But to Souls duly prepared, purged and diſpoſed for it, that Bleſſed Guide doth often manifeſt his Preſence by Senſible Attractions and Reſtraints upon the Heart, and plain Suggeſtions to the Mind; and to ſuch as once find that, I can give no better Advice then what we have, *Eccleſiaſticus* 4.-- and 6.-- which, I believe, was part of the *Myſtick Theology* of the Ancients.

F I N I S.